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Reagan's Zero Option ... Zero Step Towards Arms Control

Throughout the first year of his presidency, Ronald Reagan has sounded the theme that the U.S. must expand its nuclear arsenal and that the Soviet Union is untrustworthy and bent on world conquest. Then, after millions of Europeans took to the streets to condemn U.S. nuclear policy, Reagan suddenly struck a new pose — that of peacemaker. In a speech on November 18th, Reagan made what has been called the "zero-option" proposal — namely, that the U.S. would agree not to deploy nearly 600 medium-range missiles in Western Europe in return for the Soviet Union reducing its present number of medium-range missiles by the same number. In addition, Reagan pledged to engage in serious negotiations with the Soviets at the upcoming arms talks in Geneva.

Was this a genuine and thus to be welcomed turn toward peace on the part of the Reagan administration? The Soviet Union did not think so, nor did the overwhelming majority of peace activists both here and in Europe. The Soviets, while characterizing Reagan's willingness to at least talk about peace as "a turn for the better," rejected the zero-option proposal as "lacking in seriousness" and no basis for talks. Peace groups in the U.S. generally regarded the Reagan proposal as a propaganda ploy rather than a real change in nuclear policy. "The speech was flatly dishonest," David McReynolds of the War Resisters League said. It was "playing games with numbers."

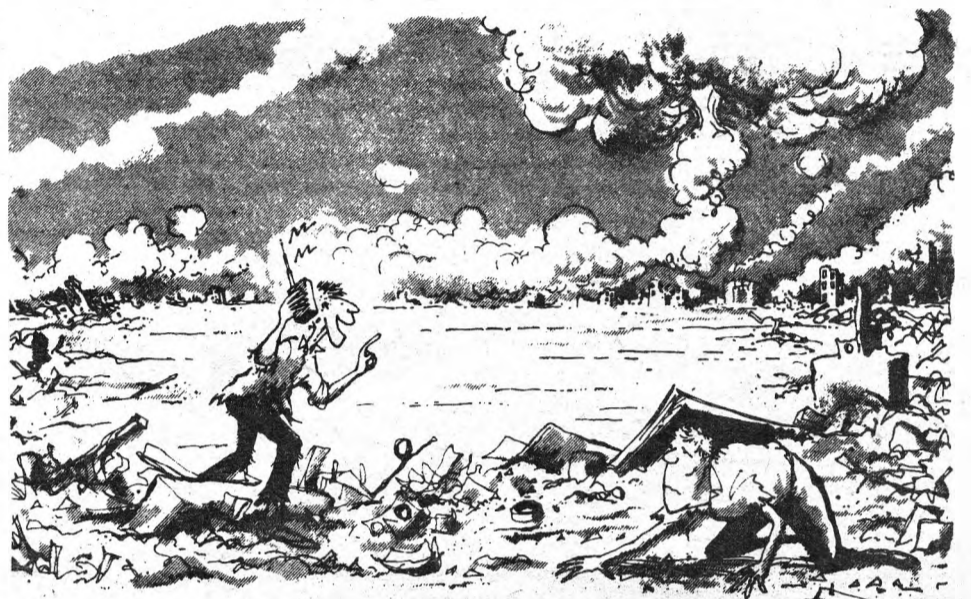
It is this numbers game which Reagan and the Pentagon are relying on to mislead the U.S. people and place the main burden for the nuclear arms race on the Soviet Union. Reagan claims that the Soviets have a 6-to-1 advantage in medium-range missiles. The deployment of 570 Cruise and Pershing II weapons in Western Europe, now scheduled for 1983, thus seems a defensive response on the part of NATO. Reagan achieves this figure by

a highly selective method of calculating missile strength. He leaves out, for example, so called "forward-based" missile systems, that is, those based on submarines and bombers. He figures for the Soviet side are distorted as well. For example, medium-range missiles that are targeted on China are included in the U.S. calculation of Soviet European capacity.

In fact, there is a rough parity of medium-range nuclear weaponry in Europe. NATO has 986 medium-range delivery systems, if we include all missiles, aircraft and sea-based weapons capable of striking Soviet territory with nuclear warheads. The Soviet Union has 975 units of comparable weapons. The Soviet weapons are all stationed on Soviet soil and none can reach the U.S. The SS20 Soviet missile, which is the missile the Reagan proposal specifically seeks to eliminate, is a new weapon designed to modernize, rather than expand, the Soviet medium-range missile capacity. It is replacing the now obsolete SS-4 and SS-5 missiles. Numerous Western military men, from Western German General Gert Bastian to the U.S.'s McGeorge Bundy, have argued that the introduction of the SS20 does not upset the balance of power. These same military experts have made the point that the present strategic U.S. nuclear arsenal is more than sufficient to deal with these and the rest of the Soviet weaponry and the introduction of the Cruise and Pershing II to Europe is wholly unnecessary. The parity in medium-range missiles is mirrored by a rough balance in nuclear weaponry as a whole. Both sides have a comparable number of launching systems. The Soviets have more warheads but the U.S. has more accurate and reliable launchers.

The U.S. deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe would thus be a major escalation in the arms race.

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'Great news! We've inflicted unacceptable damage on the other side.'

The Stockman Affair

by Ron Whitehorne

Ronald Reagan used to sell Borax on "Death Valley Days" and light bulbs on "G.E. Theatre." Then they made him President. He teamed up with this Whiz Kid from Michigan to sell what got billed as a cureall for the ills of the U.S. economy. Reagan worked the prime-time T.V. audiences, while David Stockman stalked the cloak-rooms of Congress. Together they made one of the great medicine shows in the history of U.S. politics. But the Wizard of OMB made a big mistake, telling a reporter "off the record" that the magic potion for the economy was actually snake oil and poison and, worse, that everybody associated with the medicine show knew it all along. The reporter let it all leak out in an untimely article and David Stockman had to go to the woodshed.

If William Greider's *Atlantic Monthly* article, "The Education of David Stockman," were published a few years from now, it would have been regarded as pretty tame stuff. The problem with the article was its timing. At the very point when public opinion is beginning to shift against the Reagan program — because more and more people believe it is unworkable and favors the rich — Stockman comes along and confirms these perceptions. While the administration seeks to draw the wagons around Reaganomics — attempting to convince the people its economic program is a sincere, equitable and practical solution to the ills of the economy — one of its leading spokesmen appears in print characterizing this same program as cynical, inequitable and likely to fail. It is one thing for the critics of Reagan's tax program to describe it as a Trojan

horse for the rich. It is quite another when one of the architects of this program describes it in those terms.

"The hard part of the supply-side tax cut," Stockman said, "is dropping the top rate from 70% to 50% — the rest of it is a secondary matter. The original argument was that the top bracket was too high, and that's having the most devastating effect on the economy. Then, the general argument was that, in order to make this palatable as a political matter, you had to bring down all the brackets. But, I mean, Kemp-Roth was always a Trojan horse to bring down the top rate."

Reagan and his brain trust have worked hard to bring a populist image to Republican politics — that the GOP stands for tax relief for the overburdened "little guy." Stockman let the cat out of the bag — that the "new" supply-side economics is nothing but the old "What's good for General Motors," "trickle-down" Republican line of the last half century. "It's kind of hard to sell 'trickle-down,'" he told Greider, "so the supply-side formula was the only way to get a tax policy that was really 'trickle-down.' Supply-side is 'trickle-down' theory."

Reagan tells us that his administration is going after government waste and inefficiency across the board. Stockman, however, concedes that the Pentagon, which was spared the budget axe, is a hotbed of "blatant inefficiency, poor deployment of manpower, [and] contracting idiocy." He describes the military budget as "a kind of swamp of 10 to 20 to 30 billion dollars' worth of waste that can be ferreted out if you really push hard."

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Unity Party Gets Foothold in NY Election

In spite of the massive electoral victory for Republican and Democratic backed Ed Koch, independent, progressive politics took a step forward in New York, this November 3rd. Mayoralty candidate Frank Barbaro and the newly formed Unity Party gained 13% of the vote, in what had to be regarded as a respectable showing under the circumstances. The Barbaro campaign was outspent eight to one by the Koch forces, largely ignored by the media, and had to contend with the combined organizational weight of both political parties. In addition, the Liberal Party, rather than back Barbaro, ran a candidate of its own, splitting the anti-Koch progressive vote.

Barbaro, first running in the Democratic primary and then in the general election as an independent, ran a strong populist campaign, hitting out at Koch as the candidate of the banks and big business. Barbaro attacked Koch's cutbacks of city social services and his scapegoating of public employee unions. He targeted Koch's racist statements and policies. The Barbaro campaign sought to build an effective coalition of labor, national minorities and all progressive forces in the city. This effort met with important successes. Barbaro was endorsed by the New York Central Labor Council and had the backing of most of the city's

unions. In the Democratic Primary, Barbaro got 36% of the votes and ran especially strong in Harlem and the city's Black neighborhoods, where he solidly beat Koch.

Barbaro did not fare as well in the general election as in the primary. This reflects the continued strength of the two-party system among the mass of voters and organized forces. It is also related to some specific factors. The Liberal Party, the anti-communist split-off from the progressive American Labor Party of the 1940's, organized against the Unity Party and hurt its tally. The Liberals ran Councilwoman Mary Codd for Mayor. Barbaro outpolled Codd, a signal of the Liberal Party's decline, but she still effectively split the anti-Koch progressive vote. Black candidate for Borough President of Manhattan, David Dinkins, ran on the Liberal line against millionaire Democratic incumbent Andrew Stein. In the primary, Dinkins almost beat Stein, getting the support of most Barbaro voters. But running on the Liberal line, Dinkins did not do as well. Barbaro was hurt in the Black community, because many Black voters voted Liberal in order to support the popular Dinkins. The exposure of the treacherous and divisive role of the Liberal Party leaders is a boost to independent politics and the Unity Party.



While, overall, Barbaro took a progressive stand on the issues, his campaign was not without serious political weaknesses. His call for more police as a short-run answer to the problem of crime conciliated racist law and order sentiment in the city's white neighborhoods. Barbaro also backed away from making affirmative action a campaign theme. These manifestations of racism undercut the building of a firm and principled unity between whites and minorities.

The Unity Party intends to continue. It already has candidates slated for councilmatic elections, postponed because of violations of the Voting Rights Act. While the broadest forces in the Barbaro coalition, including the candidate himself, are oriented toward the reform of the Democratic Party rather than the construction of a new party, the political bankruptcy of the city's Democrats and the present domination of Ed Koch are propelling them toward independent political action.

Philly Trade Unionists Hold Unity Forum

As part of the follow-up to Solidarity Day, a number of Philadelphia trade unionists sponsored a forum on November 17th, as a first step toward developing an "Agenda of Resistance" to the Reagan program. "Unity Night," as the event was called, was organized by the Philadelphia Solidarity Committee, a grouping that came into being to build the massive September 19th demonstration and consists of the more forward-looking union leadership and labor-supported organizations like Philaposh and the Delaware Valley Coalition for Jobs.

Unity Night drew an audience of about one hundred trade unionists and community activists to hear four

speakers put forward their views on the tasks of the labor movement in the coming period. Ray Pollard, Vice President of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, Carol Rosenblatt, President of AFSCME Local 2187, Doc Livingston, President of the Philadelphia Cluster of PATCO, and Bob Wolper, staffer for the United Food & Commercial Workers, were the featured speakers. A representative of the International Association of Machinists was to be on the program but was unable to attend.

The speakers sounded several common themes — the giveaways to the rich and takeaways from working people and the poor, as the core of the

Reagan program; the need for unity on the part of labor and its allies in the face of these attacks; and the urgency of political action. Both Ray Pollard and Carol Rosenblatt underlined the bloated Pentagon budget as a target for the fightback movement. Rosenblatt was most specific in pinpointing the requirements of unity, discussing the disproportionate burden of the cutbacks borne by the minority community and the racist attacks on the democratic gains of the civil rights era as a critical focus of labor's resistance. Doc Livingston focused on the repression of PATCO and the general trend of union busting. Bob Wolper followed up, citing the technique of retail conglomerates' loss of jobs in the retail sector to non-union conglomerates and the present

attempt to destroy the state-owned, unionized liquor store system.

Following the panel, members of the audience expressed a wide range of views. The lack of concrete support for PATCO from other unions, the need for independent political action, the lack of democracy within many unions as an obstacle to the development of the fightback, and racism as a source of internal division and weaknesses were among the themes. A number of participants cited the need for more focus on these and other issues, leading to a proposal for a series of forums which was readily adopted.

(Continued on page 7)

The Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

Who We Are



The PWOC is a communist organization, basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the principles of scientific socialism. We are an activist organization of Black and white, men and women workers who see the capitalist system itself as the root cause of the day-to-day problems of working people. We are committed to building a revolutionary working class movement that will overthrow the profit system and replace it with socialism.

We seek to replace the anarchy of capitalist production with a planned economy based on the needs of working people. We want to end the oppression of national minorities and women, and make equality a reality instead of the hypocritical slogan it has become in the mouths of

the capitalist politicians. We work toward the replacement of the rule of the few — the handful of monopolists — by the rule of the many — the working people.

The masses of people in the US have always fought back against exploitation, and today the movements opposing the monopolists are growing rapidly in numbers and in intensity. What is lacking is the political leadership which can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the people, and build today's struggles into a decisive and victorious revolutionary assault against Capital.

To answer this need we must have a vanguard party of the working class, based on its most conscious and committed partisans, rooted in the mass movements of all sectors of American people, and equipped with the political understanding capable of solving the strategic and tactical problems on the difficult road to revolution.

The PWOC seeks, along with like-minded organizations and individuals throughout the US, to build such a party, a genuine Communist Party. The formation of such a party will be an important step forward in the struggle of the working class and all oppressed people to build a new world on the ashes of the old.

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Labor Round-up

Baltimore Meatcutters Fight Wage Cuts

On October 19, 1981, about 80 meatcutters walked off their jobs and set up picket lines which were supported by their union co-workers, shutting down production at Baltimore's largest meatpacking plant, EssKay. The workers demanded that the company retract an agreement on wage and benefit cuts made two months ago and reopen negotiations with the union, Local 117 of the United Food and Commercial Workers. One angry worker carried a picket sign that read, "Ess-Kay slaughters its employees," and summed it up to the Baltimore *Sun*: "I want my money back. We all want our money back."

The 123-year-old EssKay meatpacking company employs about 800 workers. Last August, union workers in a close and hotly debated vote, approved a nearly \$2 cut in wages and benefits after the company claimed it would close the plant if the workers didn't accept the cuts. In return, the company agreed to keep the plant open for two years and that management and non-union employees would take proportionate wage cuts. Before this pay-cut agreement, the average union wage was \$7.35 an hour. It is now about \$5.91 an hour, cutting the workers' paychecks about \$50 per week. As a striking worker employed at EssKay for 30 years put the situation, "I voted yes because they said we had no choice; they said the plant would close. Now I don't care... We are working ten hours a day, six days a week, and my pay is less than when I worked 40 hours."

As soon as the workers went on strike, the EssKay Company took UFCW Local 117 to court, contending that the workers violated the union's "no-strike" (for the duration of the contract) clause in their contract with the company. The court hearing focused on the legality of the walkout, with no discussion of the workers'

grievances and the workers' position that the company had just violated the August payout agreement. The court ruled that the walkout was illegal but delayed the back-to-work order so the union leadership could "persuade" the workers to return to work over the weekend.

Meanwhile, throughout the week, management, union representatives and members of the rank and file group that launched the wildcat — dubbed the "Wildcat Committee" — met to negotiate the workers' grievances. The workers' position was that they were pressured and misled by the company into accepting the wage cuts with less than three days to review the terms of the payout agreement last August. One striking meatcutter told the Baltimore *Sun*, "The company used scare tactics to get us to agree to the cuts and now people are starting to realize that they can't pay their bills."

Furthermore, the workers took the stand that the company violated the August agreement on the cuts by failing to cut management salaries proportionately and, in fact, giving them raises through promotions.

The other factor behind the EssKay workers' wildcat was how a similar situation came down at Park's Sausage, another Baltimore meatpacking plant, whose workers are also members of UFCW Local 117. During recent contract negotiations, Park's Sausage Co. also demanded that the union members take a payout by foregoing a raise. But the workers at Park's Sausage saw how EssKay workers were intimidated by the threat of losing their jobs into accepting a payout and then how EssKay management turned around and gave raises to supervisors, as well as buying new machinery. They decided to call the company's bluff, refuse to be black-



Wildcat strikers say union got unfair deal from EssKay.

mailed, and stand firm for their wage increase. Fearing a strike, Park's Sausage retracted the payout demand and the workers won a 75¢ raise.

Under the pressure of the workers' strike, the company was forced to make some concessions. They restored two ten-minute paid breaks that had been cut in the August agreement which amount to 26¢ per hour and will return about \$10 per week to the workers' paychecks. The company also agreed to allow the union to periodically review its financial records. The company refused to make any other concessions and then threatened to fire workers who launched the "illegal" walkout if the workers did not return to work.

At the same time, the union local's president, Jerry Menapace, made a commitment to the membership that the local leadership will closely follow the company's financial progress and will struggle with management to reopen negotiations on the payout agreement again if EssKay shows a profit in coming months. He also told the Baltimore *Sun* that "If [the company shows a profit and] they don't put something back, it'll happen again," referring to the wildcat strike.

The wildcat strike demonstrated the fighting capacity of Local 117 members at EssKay when united on their grievances. Now the union membership and leadership needs to forge strategy and tactics to win back "our

money" and to deal with the company's likely threats in the future to close the plant. Eliminating the no-strike clause is needed, since it gives the company ammunition to use against the job actions of union members while the contract is in effect.

The local union also needs to turn to the labor movement as a whole for support. The issue of the wage threats to close local plants and demands for payouts should be taken up in the AFL-CIO Metropolitan Labor Council. These threats are more and more common among companies whose main stockholders are unhappy with their rate of profit. Basically, the companies are using the current economic conditions of unemployment to pressure workers into accepting payouts so they can increase their profits. In the case of EssKay, Baltimore meatcutters have made the owners rich for 123 years. From the capitalists' standpoint, if they can't get richer, it's no great loss to them if they close the plant — they have their millions already from the fruits of 123 years of the meatcutters' labor. To protect our jobs and standard of living, the labor movement needs to take up public ownership by the taxpayers of companies threatening to close as an alternative to the workers taking payouts in order to satisfy the greed of the owners for bigger profits. It is, after all, fundamentally a question of who the profit money rightfully belongs to — the people that work to create it or those who don't.

OSHA Dead and Buried ... Fight Goes On

The passage of the Occupational Health and Safety Act was one of the few victories won by workers over the last decade. But a counteroffensive by the employers, which weakened OSHA during the Carter years, has effectively killed it after ten months of Ronald Reagan in the White House.

To call attention to this untimely death, Philaposh, a Philadelphia-based health and safety group supported by 80 Delaware Valley unions, held a funeral and wake on November 24th, complete with candlelight vigil, last rites, and eulogy.

Philaposh described the "death-blows" as:

- The federal labeling standard proposal, intended to guarantee workers the "right to know" when they are exposed to hazardous substances on the job, was withdrawn without even allowing for public comment.

- Based on its current budget projections, OSHA is planning to make 14,700 fewer inspections over the next two years.

- The requirement that workers be paid for time spent on "walkaround" inspections with OSHA was killed.

- The effective date for the third-year medical removal protection requirement for workers with dangerously high lead levels in their blood was postponed.

- Over 100,000 booklets informing textile workers of the hazards of cotton-dust exposure were destroyed on the grounds that the cover photo of an ill worker was "biased" against management.

- The hearing conservation amendment, intended to provide preventive measures to guard against hearing loss, was weakened.

- The right of workers to have access to their own medical records has been threatened by proposals to fine workers for disclosure of this information.

- The development of a standard for allowable levels of known carcinogens — cancer-causing substances — has also been postponed.

The group pledged to continue the fight for worker safety, citing the need for renewed pressure at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as contract protection through collective bargaining. To contact Philaposh, call 215-568-5188.

Reagan's Zero Option

(Continued from page 1)

To offer not to deploy these missiles in exchange for the Soviets withdrawing existing missiles is, in effect, to expect the Soviets to disarm unilaterally. It is as if one man with a gun says to another man with a gun, "I will agree not to acquire a second gun, but in exchange you must give up the gun you already possess." It is not difficult to see why the Soviets were less than enthusiastic about the Reagan plan.

One gauge of the sincerity of the Reagan administration's commitment to arms control is the manner in which the zero-option proposal was made. Standard diplomatic practice calls for

such proposals to be made privately to the other concerned party before a public announcement is made. This practice was not followed in this case, an indication that propaganda points rather than real negotiations is what Washington had in mind. Another giveaway to the administration's intentions is the selection of Paul Nitze as U.S. negotiator for the coming round of arms control talks. Nitze is a long-time nuclear hawk and virulent anti-Sovieteer. Finally, the Reagan military build-up goes on unchecked. The very day Reagan made his proposal, Congress voted 197.4 billion dollars, up \$25 billion over last year, for the Pentagon.

PFT Holds Line ... Layoffs, Cutbacks Stopped

by Dina Portnoy

On October 28, after almost two months on the picket line, Philadelphia school employees, members of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) returned to work and classes resumed for over 200,000 school children. By no coincidence, October 28 had been the day for which the PFT and the AFL-CIO had called a general strike.

However, at 5:30 the previous evening, a Commonwealth Court judge suddenly handed down a decision which reversed much of an earlier lower court's decision, restored the jobs of 3500 laid off employees, re-stored the programs cut by the School Board, and ordered teachers back to work the next day. It established the viability, at least in part, of the PFT contract.

Although PFT members lost a 10% wage increase and increased benefits which had been negotiated for this second year of the contract, and although the judge set a precedent of arbitrarily throwing out one year of a two-year contract, sending workers back on the first half, the decision was, nevertheless, a partial victory for the PFT and for the battle to defend quality education. Class size was held at 33 students and literally hundreds of cuts in educational programs, including math and reading specialists, librarians, art, music and science instruction, funds for desegregation and bilingual education, were all restored.

In fact, the judge's decision echoed the very plan which PFT President John Murray had been calling for all ~~the~~ strike and the summer before it — "Bring everyone back to work with the contract in place and we'll discuss other economic issues and funding while school is in session." Yet, after two months, it took numerous demonstrations by parents at City Council, and the show of strength and unity of the labor movement in the threat of a general strike, to open the schools.

ROLE OF LABOR MOVEMENT

Despite daily news media stories downplaying the general strike and pointing out the lack of labor support and labor *disunity*, at the final moment Mayor Green and the city's businesses decided not to risk it.

Three weeks earlier, when Murray called on the Philadelphia AFL-CIO Council to support such an action, he got a standing ovation from the AFL delegates and other non-affiliated local labor leaders who attended. Many trade unionists gave firm support to the PFT's struggle. Most particularly, Henry Nichols, President of Local 1199-C, the Hospital Workers Union, clearly articulated the common interest that workers had in fighting the attacks on labor, public service employees and on public education. In the final hours of October 27, it was clear that support among labor and community groups would have made this general strike a strong show of mass support and could have, in large part, shut down the city for a day.

Nevertheless, the media was not entirely incorrect about some disunity within the labor movement. Some union leaders paid lip service to the need to fight for the PFT's contract and support the general strike. They were not willing, however, to either risk calling for a job action by their members or do the necessary agitation to win rank and file support. Nationally, it wasn't until October 27

that AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland gave it public support. Of course, that's not too surprising from the same labor leader who waited months to take on any responsibility around the fired PATCO workers. Two weeks before, Kirkland had sent fact finders from his office to "investigate" the situation. Did he really need to investigate to find out that, yes, the PFT was on strike before supporting such an action? The general strike, after all, was not invented by John Murray in 1981 — such concrete demonstrations of labor solidarity are part of the history of the U.S. trade union movement.

The PFT was also, in a sense, paying for the weaknesses in its own history around labor solidarity. Some union leaders excused their own unwillingness to support the strike by asking what the PFT had done for other unions, particularly blue collar workers and predominantly Black unions. The overwhelming vote by PFT members to cross the picket lines of the Board of Education maintenance workers in Local 1201, in 1977, contributed to this. The PFT, although it represents professional and non-professional workers and almost half of its membership are minorities, is viewed as predominantly white teachers. And it is this group which has historically been in the leadership of the union, bringing with it both racist attitudes and a sense of superiority to other workers, embedded in "professionalism." Although the importance to all workers of defending this attack on a labor contract and on public education should have been the primary consideration, these weaknesses gave some labor leaders a rationale for standing on the sidelines.

GREEN'S GAMEPLAN

Mayor Green had hoped to impose his austerity plan for the schools by playing on the divisions between the PFT and the Black community — divisions rooted in a legacy of racism within the PFT. This was evident in the Board's strategy of seeking to open schools in Black neighborhoods.

Fundamentally, this plan failed because parents and community activists for the most part directed their main fire at City Hall, rightfully understanding that whatever their differences with the union, the Mayor bore the primary responsibility for the school crisis.

The PFT took some important forward steps to counter Green's strategy and seek to build an alliance with the community. Before the strike began, the union mobilized to speak to community groups and distribute thousands of leaflets that explained the unity of interests between the union in defending its contract and the parents in opposing the cutbacks in educational programs. The union joined with community forces in forming the Coalition to Save Our Schools. In the course of the strike the new PFT leadership, brought to power by a broad rank and file movement, demonstrated a willingness to listen and respond to criticism from community supporters. The result was broader and more visible support for the strike, ranging from demonstrations explicitly supporting the union position to parents joining teachers on picket lines.

Nevertheless, the union leadership has yet to grasp that the key to building such an alliance is a consistent and serious struggle against racism —

including the manifestations of racism within its own ranks.

The PFT leadership did not seek to dramatize the racist character of the attack on public education in the city. Given a chunk of prime time television to respond to Mayor Green, PFT President John Murray did not even mention the unequal impact of the school crisis on minority school children. Given that the PFT was unwilling to target the racism of Green and Co., it is not surprising that it was unprepared to deal with racism closer to home.

Lack of respect for minority parents, and secondarily white working class parents — ranging from open contempt to unspoken fears — is a fact of life among teachers and in this strike, as in strikes past, it undercut the attempt to build unity between the union and the community. For example, while PFT picket lines were generally disciplined, there were some isolated cases in which racial epithets were hurled at Blacks crossing the line. In community meetings, some teachers described themselves as deserving of "combat pay" for teaching in minority neighborhoods while others used the imagery of missionaries in the jungle to describe their "dedication." Of course, the PFT cannot control the attitudes and behav-

ior of all its members, but it does have an obligation to condemn racist actions and educate its ranks.

The costs of racism were evident in the failure of many white teachers, out of fear and lack of respect for the Black community, to do outreach in the community. Many parents never got the message about the real impact of the projected cutbacks on their children's education because PFT members didn't get the word out. When they did, the difference in the level of parent and community support was dramatic. For example, the Board targetted the Duckery School as one of the schools in Black neighborhoods that it planned to open. The striking PFT members from Duckery canvassed the neighborhood, stood on street corners and went door to door, discussing the union's position and demands. When that school did open, only 75 students attended.

For every activity of the PFT, the demonstration around City Hall, the labor rally at the Civic Center, and the general strike, the PFT solicited community support. Yet, at community and parent events, such as demonstrations at City Council, the ministers' march from City Hall to the Board of

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photographed by Paul Choitz

The KJAC organizers pictured here were all fired.

VISTA Fires Community Group's Organizers

On October 10th, during the Philadelphia teachers' strike, a motorcade of parents, strikers and community activists descended on the home of Mayor Bill Green. Their message was simple — stop the cutbacks of school programs, end the strike, and open the schools. Among the demonstrators was Kathy McManus, a mother of four public school children and the Education Organizer for the Kensington Joint Action Council — KJAC. McManus is also a VISTA worker. She was apparently spotted by Joseph Bass, Acting Chief of the local VISTA office, on a television newscast. The result — all four of KJAC's VISTA's were fired. The firings are part of a city-wide and nation-wide crackdown on this last remnant of the poverty program. VISTA, like so many other federal programs that have provided at least some minimal services to poor and working people, does not fit into the Reagan safety net.

KJAC, an activist community group of Blacks, whites and Hispanics, has played an active role in the fight for quality, desegregated education in the city over the past several years.

McManus, in helping to organize the protest at Mayor Green's house, was clearly "aiding the poor," which is what VISTA claims to be all about. But to Bass and the VISTA brass, McManus was taking sides in a labor dispute, something VISTA workers are prohibited from doing. McManus and other KJAC members were quick to point out that it was impossible in the concrete circumstances to oppose the cutbacks in the Philadelphia schools without supporting the position of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers in its "labor dispute" with the Board and the Mayor.

The VISTA action will cost KJAC five organizers and over half its budget. Funding was due to run out in March and was unlikely to be renewed, so this cutback comes sooner rather than later. Nevertheless, KJAC intends to fight the ruling and has filed suit in U.S. District Court on the grounds that its constitutional right of free speech has been violated. In a related case, VISTA's working for the Tenant Action Group, a militant, city-wide tenants' organization, were also fired recently.

All's Normal, but Not Well in Philly Schools

by Debbie Bambino

First, the good news — the teachers strike is over and our kids have been back in school for little over a month. Now, the bad news — everything's back to "normal" in the Philadelphia school system. "Normal" in Philadelphia means everything from a lack of funds and overcrowding, to disorganization and a shortage of supplies, all of which spells continued neglect of a school system that is more than 70% minority and overwhelmingly working class.

Concretely, at Birney Elementary in Logan, normal meant that many second grade students spent a full week back in their first grade classrooms. They were doubled up with the new first grades, because there was no classroom or teacher prepared for them. At Morrison Elementary in Olney, normal meant up to 49 students in each of the first grade classrooms (33 students is the maximum allowed). And it also meant that the solution to this overcrowding was a weeding out of all the "problem" students and the creation of a new first grade especially for them.

"Problem," as defined at Morrison, includes any child who is repeating first grade, seems restless, didn't score well on the kindergarten test and, last but not least, all those children who are seriously in need of bilingual education. In other words, if you don't speak English, you're a problem. You don't have to look too hard to see that normal at Morrison meant the creation of a "throwaway class."

And finally, at high schools and junior highs, like Cooke in Logan, normal meant that teachers and students had rosters that were based on all the cutbacks being in place. And since the cutbacks in programs were declared null and void, at least for the time being, we had teachers without students and vice versa for more than two weeks.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS DIVIDED

Normal in Philadelphia means that every parent and teacher you talk to has a horror story about the conditions and treatment of students in their school, but unfortunately, it also means that these parents and teachers stand divided. Parents are divided from other concerned parents by racism and national chauvinism. So while Birney, an overwhelmingly Black school, and Morrison, a predominantly white one, are only about four blocks apart, there's no communication between the parents at these two schools. White parents see no need for joint work. In fact, most of them are just relieved that their kids go to Morrison and not Birney. All you have to do is ride by both buildings to see which is in better condition — Morrison. And instead of recognizing that it's the School Board's racist neglect of Birney which is at the heart of its deterioration, the Black students and parents get the blame.

Parents stand divided and the School Board and their lieutenants in the schools, the principals, would like to keep it that way. They'd like us to worry only about our individual children's needs. For example, at Morrison, when a white parent had her child transferred out of the "throwaway" class and raised questions about all the other kids' welfare, the principal's response was, "What do you care

for?" And the parent just backed down.

Also at Morrison, when the notices for the meeting to discuss the transfer of these 30 children into the "problem" class went out, it was sent home with the first graders and only in English. The notice gave no real indication as to why our children were being transferred. I was the only parent who showed up at the meeting and the principal's attitude was clear — no one else cared! She didn't stop to consider that many of the notes might never have made it home, or that many parents are still working at 4 p.m. or, finally, that notes written in English alone are insufficient. She just decided that 29 other families didn't care.

She made snap judgments about parents, especially minority and immigrant parents, being irresponsible. On the other hand, she went to great pains to assure me that the School Board's role in this situation was second only to hers — i.e., admirable. She went on to explain that the disorganization and shuffling around of students was really unavoidable and that, unfortunately, it wasn't over yet. Because the teacher presently assigned to the "problem" class was a substitute and due to the union and seniority rights (pronounced as though they were dirty words), these children would be disrupted again in December, when their third teacher would arrive.

The principal's double message was clear. According to her, I stood alone (with her, of course), none of the other parents cared and the "big, bad union" was the source of the problem. She failed to take responsibility for her role in all of this, especially for the racist means by which these kids were lumped together. Adding insult to injury, when my son's records were reviewed and his mistaken placement was caught, all she said was, "I'm sorry" and transferred him back to his original class. She didn't want to discuss how many other mistakes had been made, nor was she willing to explain why her method of selection was valid.

Parents and teachers stand divided too. Many teachers echo the perspective of the principal mentioned above, that parents, especially minority parents, just don't care. They just ship their kids out in the morning and forget about them all day. In fact, many teachers seem to think that all parents care about is making their job harder, either through a total lack of concern and cooperation or by making "unreasonable" and oftentimes "anti-union" demands. Here again, racism plays a key role, because it is Black parents who automatically get summed up as scabs or anti-union. Their advanced role in the struggle for quality education gets turned on its head and they get blamed for the lack of communication and cooperation between the union and the Black community, in particular.

LOGAN SCHOOL SHUTDOWN

Recently, at the Logan School, concerned Black parents attempted to meet with teachers about their criticisms and concerns. While the concrete criticisms are not clear at this time, the teachers' response is. The teachers literally refused to talk, hiding behind the fact that they were in a "faculty" meeting and that it was inappropriate for parents to participate. Once again, we have teachers, many of whom are white, refusing to



even meet with Black parents. These parents then sought help from State Senator Milton Street, organized a picket line and shut down the school, demanding that eight teachers be transferred. Now the union's ready to meet, but they keep trying to pass off this whole "unfortunate" situation as a reflection of anti-union hostility on the part of the parents, a "carryover" from the strike. In their view, the burden lies with the parents.

While Milton Street did take an anti-union position, claiming that "he was tired of unions controlling the schools," the parents have not made similar statements. Their practice speaks for itself, their first step was to try and talk with the teachers, but this was seen only as an attack on the union and not as legitimate parental concern.

At Durham Elementary in South Philadelphia, a teacher of an overwhelmingly Black kindergarten advocates an "open classroom" approach, which basically means the kids are playing a lot of the time, have no homework, etc. Recently, when parents challenged this approach and explained that their kids knew how to write their letters and were accustomed to homework and that they'd like the teacher to build on that training and discipline, the teacher dismissed their ideas as "interesting" or, in other words, "off the wall!"

These children were given advanced training by their Black pre-school teachers. This accent on pre-school training is an attempt to counter the racist treatment these kids will face later. It's an effort to give them a head start which this kindergarten teacher is undercutting.

Now these parents are faced with going over her head and maybe they'll have to organize a protest, before they'll be taken seriously. If they do continue to struggle for their right to have some say in how their children are taught, they too will be summed up as anti-teacher and anti-union.

Completing this not too rosy picture, parents tend to blame teachers for the problems in the schools, uniting with Mayor Green and the School Board's line that teachers are only concerned with salary increases and "soft" jobs and not our kids' education.

The future of the Philadelphia schools looks pretty bleak unless we

deal with the issues that keep us divided. We need a city-wide movement of parents and teachers to effectively counter the School Board and city administration's lack of commitment to quality public education.

TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY KEY

While there are many divisions and issues to be addressed, the division which was so effectively manipulated by Green and Co. during the strike — the division between the parents and teachers — is at the top of the list. The question of teacher accountability must be met head on before parents and teachers can unite. A concrete proposal must be hammered out that insures investigation and decisive resolution of all parent's grievances, including evaluation of teacher performance and criticisms of racism toward students. The union must be struggled with to participate fully in this process of discussion. The union has consistently refused to address this question seriously. Instead, any mention of teacher accountability has been labeled "union busting." The union's failure to recognize parents' rights to exercise some real control over their children's education cannot be separated from the teachers' view of who those parents are, namely predominantly minority and overwhelmingly working class people.

The issue of teacher accountability is being addressed by the Save Our Schools Coalition (SOS). SOS was formed during the recent strike. It is a city-wide coalition of parents, teachers and community activists committed to the fight for quality integrated public education for all children. The coalition's next meeting will be held on January 12 at the 1199-C Union Hall, 1319 Locust Street, at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 843-8464 or 224-1377.

The Organizer will have another article on the issue of teacher accountability in its February issue.



Bill Plympton, Health/PAC

New Bedford Seafood Strike in Trouble — More Militancy Needed

by Karen Russine

New Bedford seafood workers, still out on strike after four months, are fighting attempts by the dealers to cut their pay, take away many of their benefits, and scuttle their union. Braving chilly wintry winds, with no money coming in, many strikers are standing firm. The impact of the strike on this key industry has affected the whole city, as restaurants and truckers are feeling the pinch. The dealers' attacks are part and parcel of Reagan's and big business' attacks on the people.

Seafood workers, members of Local 1572-6, International Association of Longshoremen (ILA), went out on strike July 30th after 12 dealers offered a takeaway package of \$2 to \$3 in pay cuts to trimmers, packers, and skimmers; reductions in holiday and vacation benefits; changes in job categories; and provisions that would force many workers into part-time status, depriving them of their fringe benefits, such as health insurance. Although the dealers cited increased competition from nearby ports as the reason for the cuts, they have so far refused to open their books to the union. Since most nearby ports pay the same as or better than New Bedford, it's clear that the dealers are just using this as an excuse to increase their profits by cutting workers' wages and benefits.

The dealers have been planning this offensive against the seafood workers for a long time. By bringing in cutting machines to replace the skilled cutters, hiring scab labor, subcontracting to

non-union fillet houses, and dealing in scallops and whole fish that don't require processing, the dealers have been able to stonewall at the negotiating table and keep the strike going.

In addition, the dealers have sought to divide the union by settling with one shop at a time, rather than bargaining as a group like they have done in the past. This practice is being used by companies all over the country.

For example, when one dealer, the New Bedford Seafood Co-op, settled, management immediately began bringing in fish to cut for other struck houses, breaking a "gentlemen's agreement" that they had made with the union.

DEALERS PUSH "CATCH-22" CONTRACT CLAUSE

Another tactic that has hurt the union has been the dealers' insistence on putting a clause in the contract saying that if another house settles for a lower amount, then the house with the signed agreement would drop down to that lower figure. This clause makes a mockery of a contract and the whole collective bargaining process, yet the dealers are getting away with it.

The first house to settle, Seafood Co-op, got \$7.40 for the unskilled workers, the same rate they were making at the time the contract expired. This was a victory in the wake of the dealers' offensive against the union. But the inclusion of this clause made the victory short-lived: When the next



house was forced to settle for \$6.00, the Co-op's wages dropped down to \$6.00 as well. Strikers fear that other shops may settle for \$5.00 or even \$4.50.

The dealers have also had many advantages in their efforts to beat back the union. For starters, the local newspaper and radio and TV stations have given almost no coverage to the seafood workers' side of the story. They have tried to shape public opinion into thinking that the union is to blame for the strike and that seafood workers are "greedy," that they were making too much money to begin with. While wages of \$7.40 to \$7.90 an hour are higher than wages in many local industries, they are below the national average for industrial workers. And the hourly wage is misleading since seafood workers only average 26 hours of work per week, because of the seasonal nature of the business.

In fact, \$7.40 is letting the dealers off cheap, considering that seafood workers must work in subzero temperatures, causing many to get arthritis. They also have to contend with getting bones stuck in their fingers, getting cut with knives, and risking back injuries from floors slippery with fish slime.

STATE BACKS DEALERS

The courts have also been on the dealers' side. Recently, they granted the dealers a 21-day injunction, prohibiting any picketing. This hurt the strike a lot. The excuse for the injunc-

tion was 77 alleged incidents of violence and vandalism by the strikers against the dealers. Even though many of these incidents could not be traced to the strikers, the court held them liable for any damages done to the dealers. Meanwhile, the union's charges of 25 alleged incidents of violence against the strikers by scabs and management people has been put off by the courts until June of 1982!

Last but not least, the federal government has done its share to help break the strike. When Reagan's budget cuts began to take effect on October 1st, many strikers were cut off from receiving food stamps, and some were even cut off from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). These cuts have played into the dealers' hands, forcing some strikers to go back to work at non-union shops just to be able to feed their families.

WEAKNESSES OF THE UNION

The ability of the seafood workers to fight the dealers' attack has been seriously hurt by the "business as usual" leadership of the union. Union officers had plenty of warning signals. They could have seen the strike coming and mobilized people; had union-wide strategy sessions, involving all workers interested in participation; put money aside for a strike fund. They could have struggled with other segments of organized labor in the city, particularly the Teamsters, who have several unions on the waterfront, to stick with them if a strike did arise so that it could be settled quickly and decisively in the workers' favor.

In fact, the leadership hasn't led at all. They have had no strategy for winning the strike. And, instead of relying on the initiative and militancy of the membership, the leadership has made it clear throughout the strike that they aren't interested in listening to the rank and file's ideas on how to move the strike forward. Instead, they have wrapped themselves in the letter of the law, not doing anything because something "might" be illegal. So strikers' ideas of rallies to boost morale, picketing the bosses' homes, having interviews with the media, even having more union meetings, have all been ignored, even though many proposals are tactics used effectively by other unions to put pressure on companies they are striking. Instead of going out on the lines, the leaders have hid in their offices.

Furthermore, the leadership has done nothing to build unity between Portuguese immigrant workers, who form a substantial part of the work force, and native-born workers, so many native-born workers have tried to blame the immigrants for the problems of the strike. There has been scabbing by workers of all nationalities.

(Continued on page 16)

People Fight Gas Hike in Baltimore

On November 10th, a record-breaking crowd of 500 people packed the first public hearing on the Baltimore Gas and Electric proposed rate hike. And this was only the beginning of a series of planned protests at the public hearings around the city. Why such an outcry, after several years of silence, as BG&E bills have been steadily rising?

BG&E is asking the Maryland Public Service Commission for an additional \$199 million — the largest rate increase in their history. For the average customer, this would mean:

—An increase of \$12 in each monthly bill;

—An increase in the service charge, from \$4.50 to \$6.02 for gas and from \$4.14 to \$5.13 for electricity.

—An increase in the reconnection charge, from \$6 to \$30.

How does B G & E justify this latest rip-off? Over one-half of the increase would be used to raise their guaranteed profits by 20%. Profit is now 9.5¢ on every dollar. If the rate hike goes through, it will be 11.5¢. Another \$33 million of the increase would go to pay

future costs of future inflation — we would be paying for inflation that hasn't hit BG&E yet! The other \$48 million is what BG&E claims to need to keep their rate of profit at its current level.

At present, the movement against the rate hikes is a loose coalition of community groups, churches, senior citizen groups, labor, civil rights groups, and others. The Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition (CLEC) is playing a key role in pulling these groups together, and so far they are organized solely on the issue of stopping the rate hikes.

The turnout of 500 people at the first rate hearing represents a significant step forward in two ways. First, the people of Baltimore are in a strong position to win against BG&E. In the past years, when the people have been the most organized, the Public Service Commission has granted the smallest rate hikes. Second, by being so broad, this coalition has the potential of mounting a serious challenge to the pro-business policies of the ruling elite in Baltimore.

A first step toward making this happen would be to broaden the program to include the demand for public ownership of gas and electric utilities. A second demand should be immediate restructuring of the rates, so that poor and working people would no longer pay the highest rates while large commercial and industrial users get giant discounts. Many forces within the movement against the rate hikes support these demands.

The final, and largest, public hearing will be on December 1st, at Polytechnic High, at 7:30 PM. Organizers expect a turnout of 1,000-2,000 people. For this to happen, it is important for all groups to mobilize their rank-and-file. A particular focus should be on local unions. While some top labor leaders in Baltimore have played a very active role, local union membership has so far been under-represented.

The Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition can be contacted at: 235-5588.

Progressive Forces Score Gains in Boston Elections

In an atmosphere of crisis and cutbacks caused by Reaganomics, Proposition 2½ and Mayor White's pro-business policies, Boston voters went to the polls on November 3rd and gave a progressive turn to the city's political landscape. The main gains were on the School Committee and the passage of district representation for the City Council and School Committee. The new plan will replace the old at-large system with one that combines nine positions elected by districts with five at-large slots.

Since 1951, all positions on the City Council and School Committee have been elected at-large. The overwhelming majority of representatives have come from a few neighborhoods in the city, while many neighborhoods — particularly the minority areas of Roxbury, South End, and North Dorchester — have been almost completely without representation.

The at-large set-up worked to guarantee conservative bodies, so the fight to get district representation was strongly supported by progressive forces in the city. The main opposition was organized by the South Boston Information Center, which has been the center of resistance to busing and school desegregation for years. The Information Center called district representation a plan to sneak representation for minorities in the back door, rather than competing "equally" on a city-wide basis.

The reality, however, is that despite the fact that Boston is 30% minority, prior to this election the last time there was even one Black member of the City Council was 1971. In addition, other areas of the city have also been without representation. For example, Allston-Brighton has never had a representative from their neighborhood.

RACIST DEMOGOGY REJECTED

Voters rejected the racist demogogy of the South Boston Information Center and voted for a system which will give better representation and more accountability. The Black community voted especially heavily in favor of district representation. In four wards encompassing areas of Roxbury and North Dorchester, the vote was about

5100-350 for the referendum.

The racist forces grouped around the South Boston Information Center also suffered a defeat in the City Council elections. James Kelly, president of the Information Center, after placing seventh in the primary, slipped to tenth place, just out of the running for the ninth and final position. He was edged out narrowly by Bruce Bolling, the first Black to win a seat in a decade.

However, Kelly may still end up sitting on the Council. Albert O'Neil, another reactionary member of the Council, is seeking a patronage job with the Reagan administration as reward for being one of the first Democrats in the state to announce his support for Reagan in last year's presidential campaign. O'Neil travelled down to Washington earlier this month to try to drum up some position. If he is successful, Kelly as the tenth place finisher will sneak in the back door and take his place on the Council.

None of the most progressive candidates in the race — Charles Yancey, David Scondras, and Craig Lankhorst — were able to capture a seat. They were limited by a lack of money and wide name-recognition which a city-wide campaign requires. Under district representation, it is likely that at least Scondras and probably Yancey would have been elected from their districts.

The greatest gains in the election were made on the School Committee where two Black candidates captured spots on the five-member committee, for the first time ever. John O'Bryant, currently School Committee president, topped the ticket while long-time school activist Jean McGuire ran a strong third.

Even better, McGuire knocked out Elvira ("Pixie") Palladino, one of the leaders of the anti-busing movement in the city. Palladino was soundly rejected by the voters, coming in next-to-last in ninth place — a finish that is almost unheard of for an incumbent. Her vote total was surpassed by Felix Arroyo, a progressive Puerto Rican school activist, who was making his



The South Boston Marshalls are a racist para-police organization, linked with the South Boston Information Center. These forces suffered defeat in the recent election.

first try for the office.

In a school system that is now 65% minority and under heavy attack by the mayor and business leaders in the city, O'Bryant and McGuire have both called for adequate resources to be devoted to the schools. They both have stated that the current \$210 million budget imposed by the mayor is not enough.

In a recent interview, McGuire stated, "This budget does not take into account inflation and salary raises, and I've been shocked that this city is not as upset about the resulting school personnel and program cuts as it was with other cuts in municipal services."

FIGHTBACK AROUND EDUCATION KEY

However, it remains to be seen how strong a resistance they will put up to the cutbacks. Last year, O'Bryant caved into the pressure and voted for the layoff of over 1000 teachers and elimination or deep cuts in many programs. Although he protested about being forced to vote for cuts he opposed, he nevertheless argued that the Committee had to face the "fiscal realities."

There is no doubt that O'Bryant was in a tough position on the Committee, with no real allies and facing an intense campaign by the Mayor and media to scapegoat the school system for Boston's fiscal ills. However, O'Bryant chose to play it safe. He did not protest nearly loudly or strongly enough, nor did he seek to organize support among parents and teachers to oppose the mayor. Hopefully, the addition of McGuire will lead to a greater willingness to aggressively resist future cuts and restore present ones.

The School Committee is severely limited in its power by the fact that the

city controls the purse strings. The key to forcing the city to adequately fund education for the city's children is to build a strong movement uniting both labor — especially the teachers — and the community. The main roadblock has been the Boston Teachers' Union's failure to address the concerns of the minority community. In particular, their stand opposing affirmative action in layoffs this year — which would have meant decimating the ranks of Black teachers — undercut any possibility of a united stand against this year's cutbacks (see article in October *Organizer*).

One hopeful sign is the formation of the Boston Coalition to Support Public Education, involving parent activists and teachers. Felix Arroyo, defeated candidate for the School Committee, is one of the organizers of the group. While it is just in its formative stages, the Coalition has the potential to put real pressure on the city and push the School Committee members to do the same.

The schools are a key focus of attack on Boston residents' quality of life and democratic rights, but the cutbacks have been across-the-board. What is needed is a broad movement that will challenge the corporate-dominated politics that rule the city.

This year's election results show a small but significant swing in that direction. With the next mayoral election in 1983, the outcome has to have Mayor White a little worried as his own standing in the polls sinks. During the next two years, progressive forces in the city should concentrate on building a strong grassroots movement that places the needs of the people of Boston over the bankers, insurance and commercial interests, and downtown real-estate developers. Such a movement united behind an independent candidate could make White more than just a little worried in 1983.

The Stockman Affair

(Continued from page 1)

Reagan portrays his program as a call for all Americans to sacrifice equally. Stockman describes the orgy of greed as the special corporate interests cut lucrative deals — how a program already heavily weighted toward big business was stripped of even those token measures which would have imposed some modest degree of sacrifice on the monopoly corporations. Stockman proposed a series of measures, including elimination of the oil depletion loophole, the reduction of some other tax benefits to the rich, and a few cuts in defense programs. He tried to sell these proposals to the White House as a way of packaging the Reagan program to make it more acceptable to working people and the poor — "equity ornaments," he called them. He lost. The President "just jumped all over my tax proposals," Stockman explained.

The Budget Director describes the process of wheeling and dealing with Congress and the lobbies of the corporate interests in order to secure passage of the Reagan tax program, in the following terms: "The hogs were really feeding. The greed level, the level of opportunism, just got out of control."

Finally, we have Ronald Reagan as the all-knowing scientist of the economy with his graphs, statistics, and confident predictions of economic growth, shrinking budget deficits and general prosperity. Then we have David Stockman, repeatedly describing the process of developing fiscal policy in less reassuring terms: "None of us really understands what's going on with all these numbers," Stockman confesses. "You've got so many different budgets out and so many different baselines and such complexity

Unity

(Continued from page 2)

Such a series has the potential to advance the dialogue between union activists from different unions and between labor and community activists, making an important contribution to the development of the fightback movement. Participation of Labor's allies in the planning process and future panels, as well as a more concerted outreach beyond the Left sectors of the people's movements is going to be necessary if this potential is to be realized.

now in the interactive parts of the budget between policy action and the economic environment and all the internal mysteries of the budget, and there are a lot of them. People are getting from A to B and it's not clear how they are getting there."

Peace

(Continued from page 8)

medium-range weapons. Far from representing a real step toward peace, the Reagan proposal is a transparent attempt to shift the burden for the arms race from Washington to Moscow (see article on page 1). While some may be taken in momentarily by this ploy, it is unlikely to deter the peace movement. In Europe, in particular, public opinion is well informed on the real issues of the arms race and unlikely to be taken in by Reagan's sleight-of-hand.

The "Education of David Stockman" is a welcome contribution to the education of the U.S. people on the true meaning of Reaganomics. In the year to come, it is going to take more than tight lips to rescue the Reagan program.

Reagan's Nuclear Policy Spurs European Peace Movement

by Ron Whitehorne

Last month, over one-and-a-half million people marched in the capitals of Europe to protest the escalation of the arms race and the growing threat of nuclear war. The unprecedented outpouring of peace sentiment brought together trade unionists, church groups, students, communists, socialists, pacifists, and liberals. From lightly populated, to the centers of NATO, like London, Bonn and Rome, where upwards of 200,000 marched in each city, the people of Europe proclaimed their determination to avert the nuclear destruction of their countries.

While protestors called on both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to disarm, the main demand was directed at the U.S. and its NATO allies. The resurgence of the European peace movement is in direct response to the policies and provocative statements emanating from Washington.

WAR MOVES

In December of 1979, the Carter administration convinced NATO to go along with its plan to deploy medium-range missiles in Europe. This was the first time missiles capable of targeting the U.S.S.R. were deployed directly in Europe. In the eyes of the Soviets and many Europeans as well, this represented a major escalation in the Arms Race. In conjunction with the rejection of SALT II by the U.S. Senate, the proclamation of the Carter doctrine, the U.S.-inspired Olympic boycott, and other measures following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, this marked a sharp rise in international tensions and a renewal of a Cold War atmosphere.

The election of Ronald Reagan on a platform of massive military spending and militant anti-Sovietism has deepened European fear of a nuclear confrontation. In particular, they are concerned that Europe will be the battleground in a nuclear exchange. Neither Secretary of State Haig or President Ronald Reagan have done anything to reassure the Europeans on this score. Washington is going ahead with the deployment of 108 Pershing II and 464 Cruise missiles in Europe, has initiated the largest program of military spending in peacetime history, and has adopted the strategic goal of acquiring nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, including the development of a first-strike capacity.

Recently, President Reagan made remarks to the effect that a limited nuclear war was possible. Specifically, he said: "I could see where you could have the exchange of tactical weapons against troops in the field without bringing either one of the major powers to pushing the button." At his November 10th news conference, Reagan continued to defend these remarks.

Several days before Secretary of State Haig had launched a new controversy when he talked of the possibility of a nuclear warning shot as part

of NATO's contingency plans. When asked at his news conference where he stood on this, Reagan evasively answered: "Oh. Well, that — there seems to be some confusion as to whether that is still part of a NATO strategy or not. And so far I've had no answer to that."

The Europeans are not the only ones who are concerned by the administration's loose talk of limited nuclear war. Even long time anti-Soviet diplomats are publicly decrying the Reagan administration's premise that nuclear war is winnable and thus a policy option. George Kennan, one-time ambassador to the Soviet Union and the architect of the Truman administration's Cold War policy, wrote recently in a German periodical: "Nothing fills me with more contempt and indignation than allegations that such a catastrophe could end for us or someone else with something that could be called victory." Kennan is echoed by another former ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averall Harriman, who has served five administrations as a leading diplomat. Harriman told *Newsweek* magazine: "Any thought that one side or the other could win a nuclear war is absolute fallacy." Another administration critic is former SALT negotiator Paul Warnke. Warnke told a recent Senate hearing that the Reagan policy was "a strategy of nuclear war fighting rather than nuclear war prevention...Neither we nor the Soviet Union can win a nuclear war," he added. "Nor can either country win a nuclear arms race."

SOVIET POSITION

The Reagan administration claims that it is the Soviet Union which believes a nuclear war is winnable and is preparing to fight one. Thus, the U.S. moves are portrayed as purely defensive. But the facts do not support this contention, however appealing it may be to anti-Soviet prejudice. The Soviet Union has consistently pledged that it would never be the first to use nuclear weapons and has challenged the U.S. to make a similar pledge. Leonid Brezhnev has characterized the possibility of limited nuclear war as "madness." The U.S.S.R. repudiates the idea of either side striving for nuclear superiority and favors negotiations, arms control agreements, and other measures to insure a parity between the two sides.

While the State Department dismisses all such Soviet statements as "propaganda," an objective look at Soviet policy shows that it is the U.S.S.R., and not the U.S., which is motivated by defensive rather than aggressive concerns. The Soviets have responded favorably to European proposals for a nuclear-free Nordic Zone as the first step toward banning nuclear weapons from Britain to the Urals. Brezhnev has proposed a moratorium on both the deployment of U.S. and Soviet medium-range missiles, a good faith step to begin negotiations to reduce the numbers of such missiles already deployed. The U.S. rejects this on the grounds that many Soviet SS-20 missiles are already deployed,

White House Corporation

präsentiert

Ronald Reagan
in

Frieden kann nur kommen, wenn Amerika seine militärische Überlegenheit wiederherstellt.
Ronald Reagan, US-Präsident

Es gibt wichtigere Dinge, als im Frieden zu sein.
Alexander Haig, US-Außenminister

Ein Mann geht über Leichen

President Reagan's militaristic policies have earned him the reputation in Europe of being, as this poster says, a "man who strides over corpses." This poster is being sold in the Federal Republic of Germany for one mark (50¢).

while NATO countries have yet to deploy any Cruise or Pershing missiles. What this ignores is that the Soviets have no medium-range missiles deployed that are capable of reaching U.S. targets. In addition, as McGeorge Bundy, national security advisor to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, told the *Washington Post*, "The SS-20 did not and does not give the Soviet Union any nuclear capability against Europe alone that it did not have in overflowing measure before a single SS-20 was deployed."

The big lie that the Soviets are planning for war is challenged not only by the Soviets themselves, but by some of their U.S. adversaries. Averill Harriman told *Newsweek*: "The Soviets don't want war and they know the dangers." In a plea to strip the horns and cloven hooves from the Soviets, George Kennan wrote in the *Frankfurter Rundschau*: "Now is the right time for us to learn to look at the Soviet people realistically, not as enemies, but as the mass of normal people they really are — people like ourselves, who have to cope with their modest personal problems, who seek to rear and educate their children, have their sympathies and antipathies, act rightly when they can do so and, just as we ourselves, look for a meaning in life."

REAGAN POLICY IN TROUBLE

The massive protests against NATO policy have not gone unnoticed in the capitals of Europe. The European powers are having definite second thoughts about the deployment of medium-range missiles, a policy that they have always been lukewarm, at best, about. Only Britain's right-wing Thatcher government has expressed firm support for Washington's hard-line position since the demonstrations, and its days are clearly numbered.

The peace protests are occurring in the broader context of a strong leftward shift in European politics. The election of the Socialist government in France, the shift of the British Labor Party to the left, and most recently, the election of a Socialist government in Greece are the most clear cut expressions of this trend. The Greek election is a big new thorn in NATO's side. The Greek left gained 60% of the votes and almost two-thirds of the seats in Parliament. The new Papan-

dreou government has called for the removal of U.S. bases from Greek soil and eventual Greek withdrawal from NATO. In all the NATO countries in the next period, those forces who favor U.S. policy are going to be increasingly isolated and on the defensive.

On the home front too, Reagan's nuclear policy is meeting with new challenges. Those sectors of the ruling class who have traditionally favored detente with the Soviets have become more vocal over the last month. They are concerned with the danger that nuclear adventurism, besides risking an unprecedented holocaust, will rupture the U.S. alliance with Western Europe.

While the peace movement in the U.S. has not shown the breadth and power of the European anti-nuke protests, it is nevertheless active and growing. Teach-ins on U.S. campuses in early November involved thousands of students in discussions of the present nuclear danger. Mass opposition to U.S. intervention in El Salvador, which brought over 100,000 to Washington earlier this year, demonstrates the growing breadth of U.S. peace sentiment. Rising opposition to Reagan's domestic policies is increasingly linked to demands for peace, as evidenced by the large number of anti-war banners and slogans at the massive Solidarity Day Rally in September. Still, the traditional peace movement, which is currently planning a major anti-war, anti-nuclear action for the U.N. in June, has been weak in linking up the struggle for peace with the struggles against racism and the exploitation of the working class. Overcoming this weakness will be key to forging the kind of broad peace coalition necessary to check Reagan and the Pentagon.

Against this backdrop of rising opposition at home and abroad, the Reagan administration launched its "peace initiative" on November 19th. The President dropped his strident anti-Soviet rhetoric in favor of the language of peace and reason. He made the seemingly magnanimous proposal to halt deployment of U.S. medium-range nukes in Europe in exchange for Soviet dismantling of its

(Continued on page 7)

Brinks Robbery Unleashes Phoney Charges of Terrorism

by Jim Griffin

On October 20th, Kathy Boudin, Judy Clark, David Gilbert and Sam Brown were arrested, following an attempted Brinks robbery and shoot-out in which two police officers were killed. Boudin, Clark and Gilbert were all members of the Weather Underground, a small group that carried out some bombings and armed actions in the early '70's, after failing to "revolutionize" the student movement. The most prominent members of the group have surfaced over the past few years and most observers regarded the Weather Underground as virtually defunct.

Now the FBI, aided by a sympathetic media, are seeking to revive the Weather Underground and the spectre of terrorism. At a time when mass resistance to the policies of Reaganism is growing, law enforcement authorities are trying to brush the left and the Black Liberation Movement with the tar of terrorism.

FBI DRAGNET

Three days after the Brinks incident, New York police shot and killed Samuel Smith after a high speed car chase in Queens. Smith was alleged by police to be a member of the Black Liberation Army. His license plate, according to police, matched that of a car sighted at a reputed "gang hideout." Nathaniel Burns (Sekou Odinga), a former member of the Black Panther Party, was in the car at the time and was arrested. According to Odinga's lawyer, William Kunstler, Odinga was beaten, burned with a cigarette and subjected to having an empty gun held to his head and repeatedly fired.

On October 27th, 200 FBI and SWAT cops armed with high powered rifles and supported by four tanks and two helicopters descended on the small town of Gallman, Mississippi. They arrested Cynthia Boston (Fulani Sunni Ali), Minister of Information of the Republic of New Africa, charging that she and the RNA were part of the Brinks job. The media uncritically repeated the FBI charge that the RNA was a "terrorist organization." The RNA, which advocates the formation of a separate Black state in the South, is a visible, public organization. The group has been a victim of government-sponsored terror, as in 1969, when police attacked and arrested RNA members in Detroit, and in Mississippi in 1971, when a similar attack occurred. Fulani Sunni Ali was arrested in spite of the absence of any evidence linking her with the attempted Brinks robbery. Chokwe Lumumba, a vice-president of the RNA serving as Sunni Ali's attorney, was denied the right to represent her in a Manhattan federal court. The judge barred Lumumba from the courtroom, claiming he was trying to "carry on a propaganda campaign." Later, the FBI released her, after it was found that she was in New Orleans at the time she allegedly was helping to rob the Brinks truck in New York.

On October 28th, the day after Sunni Ali was taken into custody, 30 police in flak jackets surrounded a block in Yonkers, New York, where four Black employees of the Alexander Wall Cleaning Company were at work. Police were responding to a false tip that one of the workers, Karen Smith, was Joanne Chesimard (Assata Shakur), a fugitive and member of the Black Liberation Army. When Smith object-

ed to being handcuffed, she was roughed up by police. Even though the tip proved to be groundless, Smith was nevertheless charged with "obstructing governmental administration" and her father with possessing gambling records, after the police allegedly found a numbers slip in his van. The racist hysteria fueling the police witch-hunt was demonstrated when a passing motorist, who was Black, stopped at the scene to ask directions, was dragged from his car, spread-eagled and searched.

In the week after the Brinks shoot-out, New York police and Feds raided numerous apartments and houses in New York and New Jersey in search of an alleged terrorist plot. Police spokesmen claimed these searches yielded weapons, ammunition, bomb manuals, and revolutionary literature. However, nothing in the way of new evidence linking new suspects to the case was discovered. The dragnet did succeed in bringing in two former Weather-people, Jeff Jones and Eleanor Raskin, but police could not link them with the Brinks case and they were eventually released. Eve Rosahn was charged with allowing her car to be used for the robbery. Rosahn was arrested just after completing a jail sentence incurred during the protest of the visiting Springbok rugby team from South Africa. Rosahn is being held in contempt of court on \$250,000 bail for refusing to cooperate with the federal grand jury investigating the robbery.

CONSPIRACY CHARGES

Kenneth Walton, the assistant director of the joint Federal-New York City Terrorist Task Force, claimed shortly after the robbery that the case was part of a huge conspiracy. According to FBI personnel, the Weather Underground and the Black Liberation Army are allied with numerous other left and progressive organizations in a terrorist network. Besides the Republic of New Africa, the May 19th organization has been named as a "clandestine terrorist organization." The group is a public organization which does political work in support of liberation movements here and abroad.

There is reason to believe that the government net will be thrown much wider. A grand jury could be used to conduct a fishing expedition into virtually the whole progressive movement. The FBI has already begun trying to establish new links between the

Brinks defendants and left forces. For example, FBI spokesman Joe Valiquette told reporters that defendant Judy Clark "is now a figure in the Socialist Workers Party." SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes denied this and charged that the agency is seeking "new ammunition for its drive to step up spying and disruption against workers' organizations including the labor movement, Black groups, and socialist and communist organizations." Assistant Director Walton has held up as evidence of the existence of a conspiracy shared purposes of radical groups, including "the creation of a socialist state."

Civil libertarians see the FBI's characterization of its investigation as "a racketeering investigation" as a dangerous development. They fear that the government will invoke the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act of 1970, a statute conceived with organized crime in mind, against the left and progressive forces. Under this law, if a particular crime from a list of 32 crimes is committed by an organization twice in a ten-year period, the organization may be regarded as a conspiracy and any or all of its members subject to criminal prosecution.

The new wave of terrorism charges comes at a time when the CIA is seeking to renew domestic spying, the FBI is trying to get out from under strictures placed on it after exposure of abuses in the 1960's, and Congress is considering a whole wave of repressive legislation. The relevance of a campaign which portrays the nation as vulnerable to revolutionary terrorists with ties to foreign governments to securing these goals is obvious.

Another blatant feature of this campaign is its appeal to racism and its singling out of the Black Liberation Movement. At a time when the Black Movement is resurgent and giving expression to new mass organizations like the National Black United Front and the Black Independent Political Party, the FBI is trying to weaken and discredit the movement with the terrorist charge.

The massive publicity, the military overkill, the wave of arrests and harassment that has accompanied the Brinks incident is in stark contrast to the business-as-usual approach of the FBI and law enforcement authorities to the very real and extensive threat of



Sister Falani Sunni Ali
(a.k.a. Cynthia Boston)

terrorism from the Right. The Weather Underground, if it exists at all, could probably fit into a phone booth. The Ku Klux Klan, on the other hand, numbers in the tens of thousands. The KKK, the Nazis and their ilk are guilty of hundreds of bombings, beatings and attacks, including numerous murders of innocent people — most of them Black and many of them children. The Ultra Right terrorists have strong ties to those in power, particularly in law enforcement. Here is a real domestic terror operation that threatens our democratic institutions. It's going to be our job to see that the current phoney campaign is stopped dead in its tracks and an effort against the real terrorists gets underway.

Irish Interview (Continued from page 13)

They have to confront the Loyalist state, come to terms with republican socialism. They can't be involved in class politics alone.

Organizer: Have the IRSP members of Loyalist background tried to organize in the Loyalist community?

Brennan: Oh no, it's totally impossible. They'd have to leave; they'd be afraid of reprisals against their families.

Let's say we start an unemployment campaign. The Loyalists will say, "No. Who gets the jobs?" If we struggle with them on the higher level of socialism, then the whole concept of Britain in Ireland has to be challenged.

Organizer: A number of leaders in the IRSP and many of the activists in

the Republican struggle are women. What is the role of women in the Irish struggle for freedom?

Brennan: Because of the H-block campaign, whole new layers of society have become involved: youth, women, the unemployed. A new anti-imperialist women's group has formed from women in the H-block campaign. The women's movement outside has been too reformist, too fragmented — one part takes up divorce, another takes up contraception — and they've refused to take up the national question. Now we see all the questions — divorce, contraception, the church, etc. — related to the anti-imperialist struggle. For example: the Irish economy has never been allowed to develop to allow provision of daycare. Women's liberation will only come with national liberation and national liberation will

only come with the involvement of women.

Right now everybody has to be out day and night on H-block. Some are saying: we need to keep momentum, encouraging all these new faces, women, in the H-block struggle.

In terms of the IRSP, we have a good understanding of the nature of women's oppression. There's no contradictions with other questions. We have leadership by women and men because of the politics of our organization.

Organizer: In the U.S., Black people and other national minorities are discriminated against in housing, jobs, and education, just like the nationalist people in Northern Ireland. Many Irish-Americans support the struggle

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Family Protection Act Attack on Democratic Rights

by Jim Griffin

Under the guise of "protecting the family," the New Right has concocted a legislative package that attacks the rights of minorities, women, and labor in the interests of the rich and big business. Called the "Family Protection Act (FPA)," the bill was first introduced by Senator Paul Laxalt (R-Nevada), Ronald Reagan's campaign manager and political confidant, in September, 1979. The Heritage Foundation, the right-wing think tank founded by beer baron and union buster Joe Coors, had a major hand in drafting the legislation. So did Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority. The bill is expected to be reintroduced this year, both as a package and in separate bills embodying different provisions of the Act.

The self-described purpose of the FPA is "to protect... and strengthen the American family and promote the virtues of family life through education, tax assistance, and related measures." All this sounds fine until we look at the specifics of the bill.

SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL SCHOOLS

By "education," the FPA has in mind the destruction of public education, restriction of democratic values in the classroom, and imposition of an

anti-union, open shop on school employees.

The FPA would offer a generous tax exemption for parents sending their children to private schools. FPA supporters have been active promoters of "Christian education" — a private school system that, fueled by resistance to school desegregation, has mushroomed into a \$2 billion a year industry. Most of these schools have strict ideological qualifications for teachers, including adherence to Christian fundamentalism, anti-communism, and the "free enterprise system." In addition to the tax exemption, the FPA would outlaw federal regulation of these schools, thus effectively allowing them to practice racial discrimination.

The FPA would also restrict federal funding to public schools that fail to knuckle under to the political demands of the ultra-right. States that prohibit prayer in public buildings would lose federal monies. Schools would have to establish specific procedures for parental review of school books or lose funding. Right-wing censorship of school texts and library books is a growing trend that the FPA would institutionalize. No money would be available for programs "seeking to inculcate values or modes of behavior which contradict the demonstrated beliefs and values of the community"

or "which would tend to denigrate, diminish, or deny the role differences between the sexes as it has been historically understood." The FPA would outlaw any discussion of homosexuality in the schools.

Finally, the bill would deny funds to schools that require teachers to join unions. What this has to do with the sanctity of the family is unclear. What is certain is that the FPA reflects the "right-to-work," open shop bias of its authors. In addition, the bill would exclude private schools from the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board, giving "Christian" administrators a free hand to keep unions out of their schools.

The FPA also echoes the logic of Reagan and Stockman, in substituting block grants for funding mandated for specific programs. In the name of local control and "states' rights," funds for bi-lingual education, desegregation, and programs that aid poor, minority, and working class children would be eliminated.

The chief educational aim of the FPA is a racially segregated private school system in which children are taught an anti-democratic, racist, and sexist curriculum and teachers are unable to organize. Secondly, the FPA seeks to weaken what remains of the public school system and introduce

the same strictures there.

LEGAL SERVICES

Another target of the FPA is the Legal Services Corporation. Already reeling from Reagan budget cuts and regulations, the FPA would finish the job by eliminating a whole range of services — again, for minorities, the poor, and women. This list tells us a lot about the concerns and intentions of these "defenders of the family." The Legal Services Corporation would be restricted by law from representation in any of the following types of cases: divorces; proceedings involving school desegregation; proceedings by women unable to procure abortion services; proceedings involving lesbian and gay rights; civil actions brought by prisoners against officials or to overturn their convictions; criminal proceedings, except for misdemeanors or less, in an Indian Tribal Court; and, proceedings involving military violations or desertions.

As this list indicates, the "protection of the family" is, in fact, a cover for the right wing's attacks on minorities, women, and working people generally. Far from strengthening family life, the whole thrust of this legislation would weaken it. We will do ourselves and our families a favor by burying the FPA at the first opportunity.

Reaganites Move to Gut Affirmative Action

by Jennifer Faris

We've heard a lot about Reagan's budget cuts, and thousands of people stood up against them on Solidarity Day, in Washington. But a lot less has been said about the changes the new administration is making in affirmative action regulations and enforcement. Yet these cuts deeply affect every worker.

Even before Reagan took office, his transition team recommended that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) refrain from seeking quotas to redress discrimination. The White House also made clear that it opposes any affirmative action to end discrimination, and Reagan moved quickly to defer proposals that would strengthen existing affirmative action programs, that were to go into effect on January 29th. Just two days after taking office, Reagan announced a special "task force on regulatory relief." Regulations are now judged by so-called "cost-benefit" standards. Rulemaking agencies are expected to estimate dollar figures for the benefits gained by a particular regulation against the cost of complying with it.

It did not take long to see the results of this change in government policy. Early in June, Sears, Roebuck and Co., the world's largest retail chain store, and the EEOC settled a two-year battle against the company's civil rights abuses. Dr. Richard Hudson, director of the Affirmative Action Coordinating Center in New York, called it "a sellout, a worthless deal. It's a compromise of the law and the position of minorities seeking redress from racially biased policies. And it tells us of a new change in the EEOC policy and direction that is a serious matter for minorities." The agreement contains no quotas or time deadlines for the hiring of minorities. It only

requires that Sears promise to "be alert" to disparities in proportions of applicants and hirings and set up procedures to determine whether the disparity is the result of discrimination. An EEOC attorney admitted the agreement allows Sears to monitor its own hiring practices." Sears Chairman Edward R. Telling said the agreement was a vindication of Sears' policies.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS LET OFF HOOK

Then, on August 24th, the federal government announced new regulations that would exempt nearly three-fourths of government contractors from reporting on their hiring and promotion of minorities and women. Under the new regulations, federal contractors with 50 to 250 employees and contracts worth \$50,000 no longer have to file documents proving that they are taking "affirmative action steps" with recruitment goals and timetables to overcome discriminatory hiring of minority workers and women. The new proposals also ease requirements for contractors with 250 to 499 employees, permitting them to file abbreviated affirmative action programs. Only contractors with more than 500 employees and doing more than \$1 million worth of government business would still be required to prepare written plans. Moreover, goals and timetables would be required only when minorities or women are represented in different job categories at less than 80% of their availability in the workforce. The proposals would eliminate requirements for a review of an employer's hiring practices before a federal contract is awarded. In the construction industry, it would reduce the number of affirmative action steps required on the part of contractors. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) has even

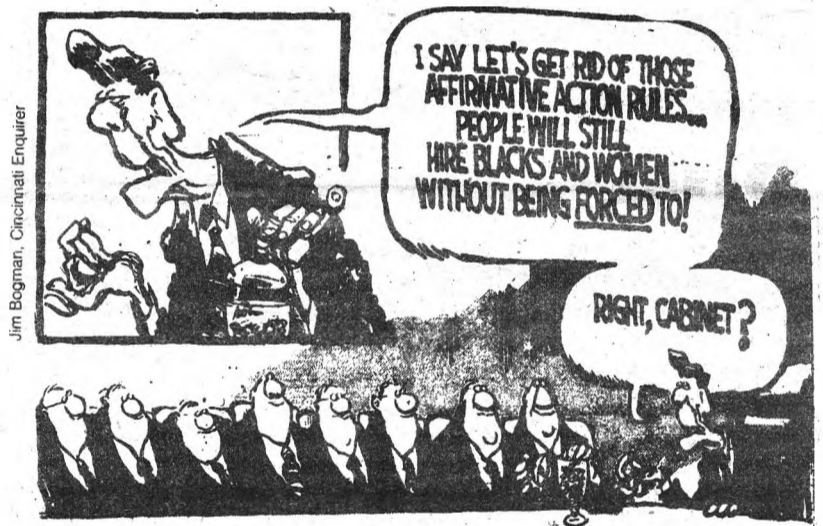
indicated that it wants to eliminate back pay penalties.

These proposals affect regulations that have been enacted since 1965. Secretary of Labor Raymond J. Donovan said they would free many companies from the "burden" of affirmative action paperwork. But, representatives of civil rights groups have used words such as "devastating," "outrageous" and "drastic" to describe the new proposals. William E. Pollard, director of the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department said the proposals "are a retreat from dealing with a very serious social problem — discrimination in the workplace. The monthly government statistics show that Black, Hispanic, and other minority workers suffer unemployment twice that of their white counterparts. It has been that way for decades. The AFL-CIO believes that opportunity must be equal. But just saying that is not enough. There must be a vehicle to make it a reality — affirmative action. To let 75% of employers escape enforcement because of alleged "paperwork" is just ridiculous. Every President, from Franklin Roosevelt to Carter, recognized the responsibility of the federal government to enforce equal job rights. Reagan is trying to weaken them."

NOW President Eleanor Smeal said, "This is not a cutback on record-

keeping, as they claim; it is a cutback in justice. The administration is showing daily how badly the Equal Rights Amendment is needed." William Robinson, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, said the new regulations "send out a signal to employers that they need not concern themselves with federal anti-discrimination laws, because they will face no prosecution if they violate these laws. This is very poor law enforcement."

The new regulations which were published in the August 25th Federal Register are open to comments from the public for 60 days and would then take effect a month following the comments. Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-CA), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities, has been conducting hearings across the nation on affirmative action. But when the Reagan administration was asked to testify, they refused. Their actions have already spoken for them. As workers, our actions need to speak for us, because this attack on affirmative action affects each and every one of us. When wages of minority and women workers are held down, all our wages are threatened. Every worker's gain is our own, and the time has come for us to fight to push the gains that have been made forward, not idly watch them go down the drain.



PFT Holds Line

(Continued from page 4)

Education, or the student demonstrations, the PFT was minimally visible or totally absent.

Many of these actions were sponsored by Black groups. It is a reflection of racist views that, on the one hand, teachers cry out for more parent participation, complaining that parents don't care, yet when these same parents and community members, albeit a small number, march around town because they do care about their children being in school, the PFT doesn't see the need to be there.

The union sought out and received State Representative Dave Richardson's endorsement on a leaflet during the summer, in opposition to the budget cuts. Richardson, a Black state representative, has consistently spoken out on progressive issues and fought attacks on the Black community. The union never made further contact with Richardson other than to get his name on a Leaflet. He had never been approached to discuss common concerns around public education or his criticisms of the education of Black children.

As the strike progressed, Richardson became more tentative on the question of the cuts and abandoned his support for the union to the point of introducing a bill which would prohibit collective bargaining by the Philadelphia teachers. Both his bill and his position are anti-labor, hand in hand with the wave of union busting, and in direct contradiction to the best interests of Philadelphia school children. Based on this stand, the union has

summed him up as a union buster and an opportunist.

Yet, at the same time, the PFT and other unions worked for a white candidate for Congress — Joe Smith — because of his good voting record on labor issues. Joe Smith is firmly planted in Frank Rizzo's corner — a man who represents racism to the City of Philadelphia. But Joe Smith never got summed up as a racist. The fact is that Richardson is viewed totally based on his faults — but Joe Smith isn't. The weakness of racism is not seen as seriously. If the PFT is to unite with its most natural allies in fighting to save our schools — the Black community — racism will have to be taken more seriously.

DIVISIONS WITHIN

Just as racism is the main obstacle to unity with the union's allies, so it is also the principal source of division within. PFT ranks held firm during this long strike and picket lines, rallies and other union activity were strongly multi-national, with Black and Hispanic, as well as white school employees, well represented. Nevertheless, a disproportionate number of the 2,000 (10% of the work force) strikebreakers were Black. Also, a Black Caucus whose leadership urged Black teachers to scab was revived during the strike.

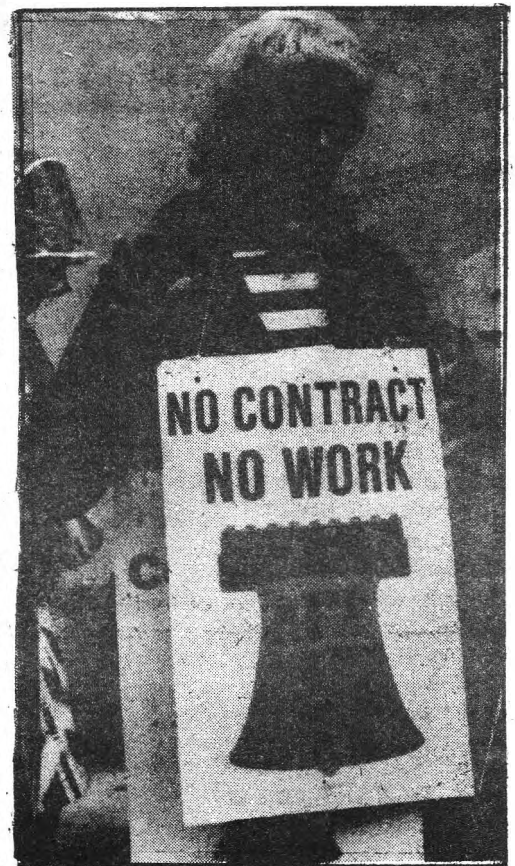
Separating itself from the present Black caucus, which is affiliated with a national caucus in the AFT, this caucus called itself the "original Black Caucus." Its leadership called on Black PFT members to cross the lines. After several large meetings, such a

mandate was never approved.

Crossing the picket lines, breaking the union, and knuckling under the massive cuts proposed by the Board of Education were never in the interests of either Black school employees (who were more severely affected by layoffs) or of Black children most affected by program cuts. But again, this diversion within the union was fueled by the historic and current racism within the union.

To build the strongest possible unity and isolate those who are genuinely anti-union, the union must address this legacy. If the union is serious about this, it will not wait until the next strike, but begin to build now on the positive steps taken and establish an on-going relationship within the community. This will not be easy. The effort to overcome these divisions cannot be limited to generalities about the need for dialogue and communications. Controversial issues must be addressed. For example, the union's attitude toward teacher accountability is a concrete indication of what sort of trust and confidence it has in the community. Parents are rightfully demanding more control over their children's education — including a voice in policies affecting teachers. The union leadership and much of the rank and file, particularly white teachers, currently view the notion of teacher accountability as pure and simple union busting. As long as the attitude prevails, unity with the community will be held back.

The fight against union busting and the struggle for public education have only begun for the PFT. The recent victory was significant — especially during a time when the same attacks are being made against other teachers' unions, other public service employees



and city school systems across the country. The fact that in Philadelphia, the union sent the union busters back a few steps and mobilized its rank and file to fight back on the picket lines and to begin to develop a thrust toward joint action with the community and labor should be a guide for the labor movement for the next few years.

This is only the beginning. A new contract must still be hammered out by PFT and Board of Education negotiators. And a more equal and mutually respectful relationship between the union and the community, which has an equal stake in quality, public education, must be developed.

RUN

(Continued from page 14)

well that they would get a response from family and friends enjoying a barbecue, the attackers led them into a trap a few blocks away. When persons from the Frederick's house rounded the corner, they ran smack into a crowd of some 200 white people who had had their Bicentennial bonfire interrupted by screams from the instigators of "the n---rs are coming."

In the midst of this, a car belonging to one of Mrs. Frederick's brothers turned the same corner and stopped. The driver was attacked with boards and trash cans and, in trying to escape, hit another car, injuring three white kids seriously. One of those injured most severely (lost his leg) testified that he had torn the fence out, set the situation up, and had been involved in previous attempts to drive the family out.

Mrs. Frederick's brother went to jail while RUN members either weakly defended the family and the brother, or walked away from the situation. We were all agreeing either openly or silently that we were right all along and our view that the family would overreact and alienate the neighborhood was true. The facts do not bear our excuses out — after six months of terrorism, the family was lured into an unsuspecting crowd in which an accident occurred as a result of the actions of white kids trying to provoke a confrontation. We turned reality on its head, writing off an attack on them in order to justify our decreasing commitment.

ANTI-WORKING CLASS ATTITUDES

Our work was also weakened by a view of the working class as backward and in need of uplifting from middle-class intellectuals. In spite of a formal

view that held that white workers could be "class conscious," we treated white working people as hopelessly racist. This led working class members of the group to write off white neighbors and was the secondary reason for retreating from building community support.

There were those working class members who were critical of our failure to listen to white workers and try harder to win them to at least oppose the attacks. When most of us were willing to retreat from doing any community outreach after our second community meeting was broken up by a fist fight, these members still insisted for a while longer on continuing to talk to at least the 150 people who had signed a petition for increased police protection for the Fredericks. They pointed to some white community members who had attended this meeting who complained about our failure to address squarely the issue of racial conflict and violence and were angered by our giving a sociology lecture that beat all around the bush with facts about unemployment, redlining, etc. They also argued that we should go where the kids hung out and into the bars where older guys hung out. Now they were not any more advanced about taking up the racist attitudes than we were, but they knew they could win some people, including some of the kids and their older brothers to a position that it was wrong to attack a family like that. Their approach clearly would have gained more support than the approach RUN opted for.

In another situation, when RUN played a role in organizing mediation to cool things between Dominican families and white kids after the stabbing death of a white teenager, these same working class members were critical of our ignoring the white kids and their side of the story. While they were wrong in belittling the racism that led to the confrontation in the first

place, a leading middle class member beat their criticism back while posturing to be such a great anti-racist friend of the Dominicans. The primary responsibility of whites is to take up the racist attitudes with other whites, not to buddy up to national minorities to look good. But he laid out the lengthy criticism of the racism of the working class members while he never once was ever willing to talk to those white kids. I had long ago capitulated to this same middle-class intellectual and in this case also united with his attitude about the other working class members.

Interview

(Continued from page 9)

for freedom and justice in Ireland but stop short at supporting the same in the U.S. What would you say to them?

Brennan: This question is obviously of the utmost importance. It's just like the necessity of the British left to confront their own ruling class, and their racism, not just in support of the Irish where clear injustices take place and where people are fighting against injustice, but also if they are ever to be in a position to change their own society.

Such things as racism are always used to divide the working class. And as long as these divisions exist it'll be impossible to create a socialist alternative. The American left and workers also have to see this. It's easy to support the Irish but they must support the same struggles in the U.S.

The same basics of democracy were demanded in Derry as in the Black ghettos in the U.S., but British imperialism couldn't give in, so the whole struggle became one of national liberation. Now if only Blacks or minorities fight in the U.S., it'll be seen as a race question, as opposed to the

It is important to note that those working class members like myself who had a long history of being involved with middle-class intellectuals were the first to unite with writing off neighbors, while working class members who had far less past involvement with middle-class intellectuals were most insistent on continuing to seek support in the neighborhood. They were reluctant to write off working class whites as more racist than middle-class intellectuals.

In the end, we used our writing off of white neighbors as too racist to excuse our own racism.

whole struggle for socialism. You need both Black and white to fight against [racist] oppression. You can see how effective that can be by looking at how the recent fighting by Black and white together in Britain had the greatest effect against the [racist and fascist] National Front.

Organizer: How did you come to be involved in the socialist and republican movement?

Brennan: When I was at the tender age of 16, a big housing movement started in Dublin. There was a big housing shortage. I thought it was unfair. I lived in a decent house but I thought all should. I got batoned [clubbed] in the demonstration.

I joined the Young Socialists, which doesn't exist now, and the Labour Party. I had a dilemma. I was brought up in a Catholic family. My grandmother wanted the Brits out. But socialism was odd to Catholics. Boy, did I get it when grandmother found the *Communist Manifesto* under my pillow. But times have changed and now she sees "Brits out" is not enough; we need justice. She sees Larkin and Connolly as great leaders. She's changing; she's 97.

The Irish Liberation Movement Today

You'd think, by the way the big U.S. media report it, that the "troubles" in Ireland today are a throwback to the sixteenth century, with gangs of bloody-minded religious bigots trying to impose their concepts of God and Satan on each other at the point of a gun. You'd also think, if *Time*, NBC, or the *New York Times* were your sources, that the British army is an enlightened party, a peacekeeping force trying desperately to keep the kooks in Northern Ireland from each others' throats.

The reality, however, is something else. Religion is there, all right, but the role it plays has more to do with who gets jobs and decent housing and who doesn't, and with the maintenance of British rule and Loyalist political hegemony, than with who has the correct path to heaven. And the British army, far from playing a neutral role, has consistently lined up on the side of privilege and power.

Wolfe Tone, a Protestant Irishman, founded the United Irishmen in the 1790's, to unite all the Irish, Catholic and Protestants for freedom from British rule and for a republic with democratic rights for all. It was then that the Protestant Irish aristocracy formed the Orange Order to tie the Protestant workers and farmers closely to them and frustrate any attempts of the working classes to unite and overthrow the privileged classes.

The manipulation of religion by the ruling classes has changed little in the last two hundred years. And the effects in Northern Ireland today are just as they were intended to be in the 1790's. For the privilege of at least having jobs — of 10,000 workers at Belfast's Harland and Wolff shipyards, only about 100 are Catholic, all the rest are Protestant — the bulk of the Protestant population has sided with the big landowners and big businessmen in frustrating the movement for democracy and independence, and for socialism.

This state of affairs has been the context for the growth of the modern Irish Republican movement and the development of its different trends.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

In 1966, the Civil Rights Movement was started in Derry and Belfast, Northern Ireland. Its founders included trade unionists, reformists, communists, as well as some longtime Republicans. Sympathetic Protestants joined Catholics in marches and demonstrations to end the flagrant discrimination in jobs and housing and to repeal the worst of the election laws that, among other things, gave those with more property (usually Loyalists) more votes on local housing boards than those with little or no property.

True to form, the Loyalist ruling classes whipped up hysteria in the Protestant communities, claiming all gains by Catholics would come at their expense and soon they'd have to live



British troops terrorize Belfast neighborhood.

under the Pope. Mobs of Protestants attacked the Catholic communities of Belfast and Derry, burning homes and beating the inhabitants.

In the August 1969 Loyalist rampage through the Falls Road area of Belfast, only six IRA men had guns to protect the lives and property of the entire Catholic community. Requests to the Dublin leadership of the IRA for more guns were refused because the officials feared that any discovery of guns by the authorities would jeopardize the non-violent Civil Rights Movement.

The continuing severity of the Loyalist repression, however, contributed to a split in the official IRA and the formation of the Provisional IRA, which provided the basic means of self-defense for the Catholic community in the ensuing years. Politically, things changed as well. The Civil Rights Movement for reforms within the British-ruled Northern Irish state steadily changed into a nationalist movement for ending that state, for cutting off the British connection, and for a united Ireland. Faced with the massive Loyalist backlash and a British army which often openly sided with the Loyalist reaction — as in 1971, with the introduction of internment when only Catholics were rounded up for imprisonment without trial — the Catholic population slowly but surely began to see its only hope of equality and justice in a united Ireland.

But how could a united and independent Ireland come into being? That was the question that had driven and bedeviled the Irish Republican movement ever since the British and Loyalists had forced partition on the Irish back in 1921.

TWO TRENDS

Two answers to that question, two political trends, have existed side by side within the IRA, and have struggled for leadership. One has claimed that "physical force," armed struggle with the border guards and police forces of the North, and occasionally of the South as well, is the route to freedom and independence. The other has claimed that in order to win the struggle with Britain, with Loyalism, and with the sellout forces in the South, the Irish Republican movement has to build a solid base in the working class and among the small farmers, the forces that make up the majority of Ireland's people. And to build this base means a concentration on a range of struggles, from jobs to housing to better transportation, etc.

In the modern Republican movement since 1969, the Provisional IRA

has exemplified the military trend, while the Official IRA has followed the course of emphasis on the reform struggles. The problem is that neither approach alone has been able to solve the problems of the working class and small farmers, both North and South, and build the unity of the most advanced forces in an organization that can give all-around leadership to the struggle for an independent, socialist republic.

By the mid-1960's, the IRA was recovering from its ill-fated border campaign (1956-62) of bombings and armed skirmishes. Its leadership moved towards a more active role in the daily struggles of Irish workers.

But it was precisely this period that the new round of "troubles" broke out in the North and the demilitarized IRA was hard-pressed to defend the nationalist population.

The Provisional movement, inheritors of the "physical force" trend, stepped into the breach. But then, what was to become of the day-to-day bread-and-butter struggles of the working class?

The official IRA and its political ally, Sinn Fein (later called Sinn Fein, the Workers Party — SFWP — to differentiate it from Provisional Sinn Fein) by 1972 called an end to any armed struggle on its part, devoted its attention more to trade union issues, and soon was denouncing the nationalist movement as sectarian. During the recent H-block hunger strike, SFWP called the National H-Block Committee "murderers," and the July 1981 issue of SFWP's magazine "Workers' Life" carried an article which equated the struggle of Catholics against their historic second-class citizenship with the struggle of the Loyalists to maintain their comparative advantage. "Unity in Ireland can only come from the bottom up," stated the author, "via the development of class and democratic politics on both sides of the border and the break-up of the blocs of Catholic Nationalism and Protestant Unionism." What it didn't say was how this unity, democracy and "class politics," could develop without a thoroughgoing struggle against Protestant Loyalist chauvinism, the main division in the working class, and against the British occupation of the North, the backbone of Loyalist domination.

EVOLUTION OF PROVISIONALS

The Provisionals, by the late seventies, were recognizing that the class struggle had to be taken up along with the armed nationalist struggle, and

they put more effort into fleshing out their view of what a future Democratic Socialist republic of Ireland would look like. They also aligned themselves internationally with the forces of national liberation in Africa and the Middle East, such as SWAPO in Namibia and the PLO of Palestine. The youth of the Provisional IRA, such as Bobby Sands, began to study closely the works of James Connolly, the great Irish Marxist and working class leader who died in the 1916 Irish uprising against the British.

Still, the Provisional movement remains a nationalist party with wide-ranging interpretations of what socialism means. Advocates of everything from a British-style welfare state with capitalist institutions intact, to a Marxist view of a nationalized economy, planned and controlled by the working class through its leading role in a new socialist state, exist within the Provisional forces.

And, the reliance of the Provisionals on the frequently conservative Irish-American connection for funds, has served as a continuing deterrent to a complete break with capitalist politics.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) and its ally, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), have been the most consistent parties in the Irish Republican movement in calling for the unity of the Irish struggle for national liberation and the workers' struggle for socialism. Born of a split in 1974 in the Official IRA over its policy of giving up the nationalist struggle, the IRSP has tried to maintain the activist policy that developed in the mid-sixties' IRA, of support for workers on strike, and for tenants against skinflint landlords, and against the takeover of the Irish economy by multi-national corporations, while at the same time backing the armed struggle for national liberation in the North. The IRSP takes much of its theory and politics from James Connolly. But, says Naomi Brennan, chairperson of the IRSP, "Connolly made one major error. He left us without a vanguard party. It was up to Connolly's contemporary, Lenin, to provide the theory and politics of the revolutionary party which the IRSP is attempting to build. (For further views and activities of the IRSP, see the accompanying interview with Naomi Brennan).

Sectors of the British government and ruling class are talking openly these days about leaving the North of Ireland. Faced with the determined

(Continued on next page)

Irish Activist Speaks Out

Interview with Naomi Brennan

Organizer: Why does the Republican Movement see the H-block/Armagh prison struggle and the hunger strike as the most important issue before the Irish people today?

Naomi Brennan: First, the struggle for independence and unification goes back some 100 years. It's a struggle for self-determination, so we can control our own lives and economy. There's always been a recognition of a war going on. The IRSP says it's for a socialist republic and not just for Brits Out; the Irish working class must control their own country...

The main reasons the prisoners' struggle is so central are: first, if the prisoners should fail their political struggle of the last ten years will have failed, their struggle will have been criminalized; and second, if the prisoners win, it will be the biggest blow to British imperialism at this time. It's not that prison is the pivot; the struggle is much bigger than that. But six have already died and two more will soon be dead. We can't let the country believe we let them die for nothing.

There's a dichotomy in Ireland between the national and the class questions. At various times, class has been taken out of the national question; at other times, the national question has been portrayed as backward, only trade union struggles being relevant. The IRSP sees the class and national struggles as one. As James Connolly once said, "There's no way I can conceive of a free Ireland with a subject working class or a subject Ireland with a free working class."

Because we see these two things going hand in hand, we see the main thrust of the attack on British imperialism coming through the prisoners and through the five demands [see *Organizer*, October 1981].

As for the prisoners themselves — and here's the unity of the national and class struggles — most nationalist prisoners come from the working class ghettos. They have housing and job problems. Those lucky enough to get jobs were all trade union members.

Organizer: What is the relationship between Provisional Sinn Fein and the IRSP? Where do you have unity? What differences do you have?

Naomi Brennan: We consider the Provisional movement as a nationalist movement with some socialist ele-

Irish Movement

(Continued from last page)

resistance of Irish nationalism, the British occupation has proven costly in lives, finances, and morale. But, according to the Irish Minister of Tourism, in a speech this past summer, the British rulers fear a "Cuba developing in their own backyard" — a revolutionary socialist island inspiring Britain's own unemployed and inflation-stricken working classes into action.

So the struggle continues...

ments. Its overriding philosophy is nationalism.

The H-block campaign is a united front [of Provisionals, IRSP, some smaller forces of the left, and independents]. The whole victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua was because of the united front. You need an amalgam of all progressive forces.

The broad front of the H-blocks campaign has worked. For the future, though, there are several issues to struggle over: Sinn Fein wants low unity, troops out, self-determination. We want more of an opposition to multi-national corporations, a more anti-imperialist broad front.

Sinn Fein's position comes from their own strength but also from their lack of clarity. They rightly see themselves as the main defenders of the nationalist population. But then they see the H-blocks committees as mainly to support them.

[Brennan at this point laid out the differences between Sinn Fein's approach to elections — run in them, but boycott parliament — and IRSP's approach — use parliament as a platform to put out your views.]

I don't see this as an attack on Sinn Fein, but as a statement of differences.

We're in favor of principled unity with anyone in the republican movement or on the left, but it must be principled. For example, we originally put out an 8-point program for a Broad Front of anti-imperialists. [Point 8 called for armed struggle to be viewed as the inherent right of the Irish people to gain self-determination]. We don't accept that point now. It could be misconstrued to mean that those not in favor of armed struggle couldn't be in the Broad Front. We feel that would be wrong. Those who feel that way should be involved as long as they don't oppose the parties who support armed struggle.

Organizer: I see that the H-block/Armagh committee has been trying to involve the Irish trade union movement in the struggle for justice for the prisoners. What success has there been?

Brennan: There's been a good amount of success, but not enough. In Montreal, Quebec, the C.S.N., a union representing over 200,000 workers, passed a resolution this summer backing the five demands and self-determination for Ireland. But the Irish trade union movement has not. It's the old division between the class and national struggles.

The construction and building trades have been most in support of the prisoners' struggles, taking days off when hunger strikers died. Many others stopped work for a day or an hour. The whole of Dundalk and of Waterford closed down. Those actions were the work of the National H-blocks Trade Union Committee.



Naomi Brennan, of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

Sinn Fein, the Workers party (SWFP) played a really disruptive role. They called the H-Block committee "murderers." Their role is due to lack of direction in the trade union movement. Mickey Mullen, leader of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) will come out on demonstrations, but he won't mobilize within his union. Thus, at the bureaucratic level, three or four Stickies (SFWP) can disrupt and organize against the H-Block campaign.

Organizer: Does the IRSP devote time and effort to trade union activities?

Brennan: Yes, but almost all other work in the trade unions is now in abeyance for us to do support for H-block. We see trade union work as important. We'd like to be more involved against redundancies [layoffs], not just for full pay [unemployment compensation], but for jobs.

Organizer: Some leaders in the British Labour Party and in the British trade unions are now beginning to call for a united Ireland and against British occupation of the North. Why has it taken so long for them to do so? And do you think they will have a major effect on the situation?

Brennan: It's not really taken them so long. In 1975, fourteen Labour MP's called for troops out. Tony Benn has more recently taken the progressive position. Labour in opposition has always been more progressive than Labour in power. Recently, Labour's National Executive Committee, all except two, called for British withdrawal and self-determination for Ireland.

But we Irish don't trust Labour to push this policy yet. The Tories sometimes can pull off imperialist retreats better than Labour, since Labour is always afraid of "looking weak."

The main reason the Vietnam movement in the U.S. got off the ground was because there were dead soldiers coming home. It's the same in Britain. Most people there have had the attitude of "get the soldiers out and let the bloody Irish kill themselves." There hasn't been a much higher attitude.

As for the British left, they're often trying to put demands on the Irish revolution: "We'll support you bombing in Belfast, but not in London." Their chauvinist attitudes come through also in telling "Irish jokes."

But also we are partly to blame in not building stronger links to the left in Britain.

It's interesting to see riots in Britain now and British police using tactics learned in Northern Ireland. That isn't a correct basis on which the British

left should organize opposition. But look at how Whitelaw is now ready to use plastic bullets against his own people. The British left has to learn that a blow against imperialism here is a blow worldwide.

Organizer: At present most Protestant Irish workers in Northern Ireland, despite high unemployment and Thatcher's cutbacks, still identify more with the British government than with their fellow Irish Catholic workers. What is it going to take for them to see their interests in the unity of all workers for a united socialist Republic of Ireland?

Brennan: That's a huge question. I'll start at the wrong end of the stick. Unemployment has primarily affected the nationalist population up to this point. The Loyalists have been guaranteed jobs by the state. There's almost full employment for them.

Things have begun to change in the last six months. Three factories have closed. Shipbuilding is cutting back. The Loyalists are beginning to feel the pinch, but not yet in housing.

Just as the English working class often identifies with the ruling class, so also do the Loyalists rely on the ruling class for gains. So you may find sections of Loyalists beginning to question their leaders. But I don't see mass sections of the Loyalist community ever coming over to seeing a united socialist Ireland in their interests. It's been bred into them so long that nationalist interests will come at their expense. No, you won't see this coming until there's a mass upheaval in the whole country. Then some will see that their interests lie with the rest of the Irish workers.

In recent Anglo-Irish talks, Margaret Thatcher wanted Haughey's [then Irish Prime Minister] commitment to a European Defense Pact in return for a 32 counties pact. [Ireland is presently a neutral country with no military alliances.] Within this pact, the British would have to move against the Loyalists. Now the British talk about a bloodbath, but the nationalists have suffered a bloodbath the last ten years. We feel the Loyalists have no strength without the backing of the British army. If they withdraw their backing, the Loyalists would have to confront their own ideology on whom to identify with.

We have several members from a Loyalist background. If you're from that background you have to come to confront British imperialism. Ronnie Bunting, who was the son of Major General Bunting, was recently assassinated by the Ulster Defense Association. The problem is: how do you organize in the Loyalist community?

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Fighting Racist Violence in Boston

—Some Lessons from the Experience of RUN

by Paul Cuoming

(The author was a leader of Racial Unity Now and is presently a member of the OCIC and the Boston Workers Organizing Committee)

White resistance to school desegregation was as intense and widespread in the city of Boston in 1975 as anywhere in the country before or since. This resistance included a sharp escalation in both spontaneous and organized acts of racist violence and harassment. Racial Unity Now was one of several groups that formed in response to this violence.

In its two-year existence, RUN actively defended Black and minority families who were the victims of racist attacks in Dorchester, Boston's largest working class neighborhood. RUN members themselves came under attack because of the stand they took. We and those who supported us were threatened and saw our homes attacked. One neighbor was knifed in the leg after helping a family. Our office was destroyed by a suspicious fire. We even had to defend a supporter who was charged with kidnapping after doing exactly what the police told us we had to do — catch the attackers.

The active opposition to racist violence by whites in the charged climate that prevailed was unquestionably positive. At the same time, RUN failed to build a broadly based movement against racist violence and ultimately fell apart. Obviously, the problem it sought to address has not gone away. The reasons for RUN's failure remain important to understand, even if this particular organization is five years gone from the scene.

What we have been unwilling to face is that RUN was fatally weakened by the same ideas and attitudes toward Black people and minorities that we claimed to oppose — attitudes that we saw at the time as the exclusive property of the masses of white working people.

Yes, we were against the level of violence, but we approached the situation like it was a given that whites and Blacks hate each other and that the whites were on the offensive. Our approach was based on our unity with the view that the real potential for violence was within the national-minority community and that it was our job to point our fingers at the white attackers, while holding the national minority family members by the shoulder. As we stated in May, 1975 (*Dorchester Community News*): "Let us not kid ourselves about what will happen if we fail to check the attitudes that are leading to racist attacks in our community. We will all be put in danger if the assaults and harassment are allowed to continue."

DEFENSE OF THE FREDERICK FAMILY

We first heard of the attack on the "Frederick" (fictitious name) family from a T.V. news spot which captured Mrs. Frederick angrily reporting how her family had been threatened and stones thrown through their windows every night for the two weeks they had lived there. She demanded police protection and made it clear they would not be driven out. RUN, under my leadership, reacted swiftly and with more vigor than ever before.

I was actually relieved to hear that the attacks started the day they moved in. The timing made it a clear-cut case

of racial attack — we wouldn't have to deal with the usual rumors that a member of a national minority family had done something to provoke the attacks. In a recent situation, we had defunded a Black-owned business from attacks and, in the middle, heard rumors that the attackers may have been provoked by the businessman's drug dealing. Although never substantiated, we assumed the rumors were probably true and slowly withdrew. Our policy to check things out first before committing ourselves was a result of our racist assumption that there is a good chance national minority victims did something to provoke the attacks. There is nothing wrong with finding out all the important facts — the problem is the assumption we were starting our investigation with. In our minds, the Fredericks were the exception and we had the proof. All they had done was move in.

The second, and most important, reaction I had was the assessment that Mrs. Frederick was fighting mad and determined to stay. This was good, in that the family was ready to make this strong stand, but our practice showed we also thought she might be a problem because we would have to be careful she did not say or do anything that would alienate the white community.

In this particular situation, we thought we could make the most of it if we could get in there and offer our leadership (that is, take over the situation), preventing the family from "messing things up" by hurting the kids, attacking them, or in any way alienating their white neighbors.

Our public position was to set up round-the-clock security watchers inside the house, build community support and pressure police for protection. We were concerned that the attacks might escalate to attempts to burn them out (which they did). Our private concern was to keep the family "cool."

Our practice was to cater to the racism of the white neighbors rather than struggle against it. In an effort to prove themselves to the white neighbors, we encouraged the Fredericks to answer inquiries about their income and employment to relieve neighbors who had heard that they were on welfare. Mrs. Frederick refused to give into our pressure and correctly criticized us for agreeing with the racist premise the questions were coming from — that they should have to prove they are the exception to the norm, in other words, a hard-working Black family. We backed off but still thought she was wrong. Out of our racism, we just saw her as anti-white and irrationally going against her best interests.

In our community work, the Frederick relatives all raised concerns about focussing on the kids and not enough on the adults that were directly or indirectly encouraging them. We would pay lip service and "agree" and then go on to ignore their correct focus. We took the easier route of trying to scapegoat the kids for acting on what the white community as a whole was thinking — Blacks move in and cause the neighborhood to go down. Our unwillingness to take up such racism head-on was due to our unwillingness to struggle against our own agreement with it, at the same time that we blamed white neighbors as too racist.

Our efforts to catch or identify the kids breaking the windows is yet another example of our hanging onto a view that we had more leadership



Scenes like this were common in Boston in 1975.

to offer, while belittling Mrs. Frederick's tactic of getting the FBI and the Federal Civil Rights office involved to put pressure on the Boston Police Department, both for more adequate protection and to get some Black cops in front of their home that would not treat them like the enemy. For months we set up elaborate plans, used walk-talkies, automobiles, cameras and many people to either catch or get pictures of attackers. At the same time, we were critical of Mrs. Frederick seeking help from the Feds because we viewed them as opponents. We failed to see that due to civil rights laws fought long and hard for, they were more accountable to uphold them. In the end, we failed to catch the kids, while Mrs. Frederick's pressure got some action — increasing police protection, increasing numbers of Black cops assigned to her home and, according to FBI records, stopping several attempts to firebomb their home. Her approach also reflected a deeper understanding that there were adults behind the scenes encouraging these kids and willing to take stronger actions to drive them out. Yet out of our racism, we viewed her as more backward.

Although Mrs. Frederick participated in most of numerous meetings (we loved to have meetings) and we did make many collective decisions, her occasional vetoes of our decisions and her unwillingness to get too caught up in our tactics led us to begin to see her as too individualistic. We told ourselves that she was just doing too much to be able to participate fully in decision-making and just needed someone to spend more time filling her in but, in reality, we felt we needed more control over the situation than she was willing to let us have. So our plans to keep the family cool were intensified. For instance, we used Ted (Mrs. Frederick's cousin) against her and her family to try and get them to go along with our strategy. We sought him out to take a more active role in making decisions with us at the house and try to convince Mrs. Frederick to go along with us.

The examples above about her differences with our focus on months of trying to catch the kids and our position that the Fredericks should answer questions about their income and occupations are two situations where we got Ted to go along with our view and to argue against Mrs. Frederick, although our attempt to beat back her leadership failed.

However, there was a time when we did successfully get her to go along with our racist position. Because our plan was based on not alienating the white community, we advocating drop-

ping charges on two young men who had been arrested for physically attacking Mr. Frederick and RUN members at a community meeting. During this attack they threatened to burn the house down.

Given that they were part of a larger group of young men who were suspected of having direct relationships with the South Boston Marshalls ("cousins of the KKK"), in the face of numerous threats of firebombings, and in the face of FBI reports of other attempts, it was insane to let these guys off with a simple apology. For the sake of not alienating the white community, we got the family to throw away what little legal support they had to protect themselves. In this effort, we again solicited Ted's help as a "voice of reason" to persuade Mrs. Frederick, whom we viewed as stubborn.

However, it was not good enough to rely on our culturing of accommodation to our "leadership" from our position as outsiders. I saw it as important for me to be in the house as much as possible. In fact, it reached the point where I virtually moved in for a couple of months, doing extra shifts, giving up school, eating most of my meals there and even sleeping over on occasion. In essence, I played the role of a white savior to whom they should be indebted.

While I told myself I was helping out and sacrificing myself, in reality, I was using the family, not only to go along with RUN's approach, but also to build an anti-racist image of myself as the true friend of the national minorities. Whenever the family would restrict the flow of RUN members in their home (we gave virtually no thought to their right of privacy), I was always the exception. "Except Paul, of course; he is a member of the family."

What this special status gave me was more direct ability to keep family members from "overreacting" and more influence on Mrs. Frederick's decisions. On some occasions, I did hold some sway in getting her to go along with decisions not in the family's interest.

Our racist approach to the family surfaced more overtly in our response to a tragic incident that occurred on July 4th. Six months after the first rock was thrown and RUN had basically slid away from doing house defense despite the fact that nothing had been resolved and attacks — though less frequent — were continuing to be a constant reminder to live in fear, three white teenagers ripped out a section of the Frederick's fence. Knowing full

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PWOC's Ultra-Leftism

The following was written by about a dozen former members of the PWOC. We will be responding in the next issue of the Organizer.

Over the past 18 months, the PWOC has practically destroyed itself.

By now, more than 80% of the members have left, while almost no one has been recruited. The organization is now a shell of its former self. Not content with wrecking the PWOC, the leadership has carried its politics successfully into the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OCIC, a national party-building network), with the same results. The OCIC has been destroyed.

Due to the lack of internal democracy in the PWOC, and due to the frenzied atmosphere of fear and guilt which too often predominated (where it became almost a crime to talk to other cadre known to have doubts about what was going on in the PWOC), we have left the organization one by one rather than forming a coherent opposition. Indeed, at the time of leaving most of us were unable to clearly formulate our differences with the leadership, except that all objected to the "methods of struggle" used in the campaigns against white chauvinism and anti-working class bias which were being carried out in the PWOC.

All of us recognized that the campaign had brought to light correct criticisms of many cadre, ourselves included. In many cases we left feeling guilty that we were unable to "keep up" with the struggle. Only after being out for some time, and talking to others who had left, did we begin to recognize more clearly the overall ultra-"left" and idealist character of the PWOC.

While it is clear that it was correct to take up internal campaigns against racism and anti-working class bias, it is also clear that the way they have been conducted has undercut their positive aspects. The mechanical nature and moralism of the campaigns has meant that overall they have set back the struggle against racism and class bias in the PWOC and the movement. The campaigns have been characterized by unprincipled methods of struggle, bureaucratic disciplinary solutions, and a withdrawal from mass work. All cadre — Black, white, those from petty-bourgeois and working-class backgrounds — have been abused in the process.

FUSION LINE CORRECT

We still believe that the fusion perspective, building a party while at the same time carrying out disciplined work in the mass movement, testing a political line in practice and recruiting from the workplace, is correct. Unfortunately, the leadership of the PWOC abandoned this perspective in favor of idealism.

The PWOC built its reputation and original base in opposition to the ultra-"left" and sectarian errors of past party-building groups, which failed to build a new party due to their ultra-"leftism." It is ironic that the PWOC has now gone down the same path.

The current ultra-"leftism" of the PWOC is a product of its idealism. The PWOC has sought to "purify" its cadre, to free them from racism,

accommodation to racism, and anti-working class bias by endless sessions of "ideological struggle." A correct line, that one of the principal reasons for the predominantly white petty-bourgeois composition of the PWOC (and the trend as a whole) was due to racism and anti-working class bias, has been mechanically applied. Dialectics and common sense have been thrown out the window.

The descent into idealism and isolation came at a time of right-wing offensive and followed several years of a lull in working-class militancy. In the face of these difficulties, the PWOC chose to advance by internal consolidation and voluntarism, focusing on its own composition instead of mass work. Despite its formal adherence to the "fusion" line, the PWOC now mirrors the idealist approach to party-building adopted by the "rectification" forces.

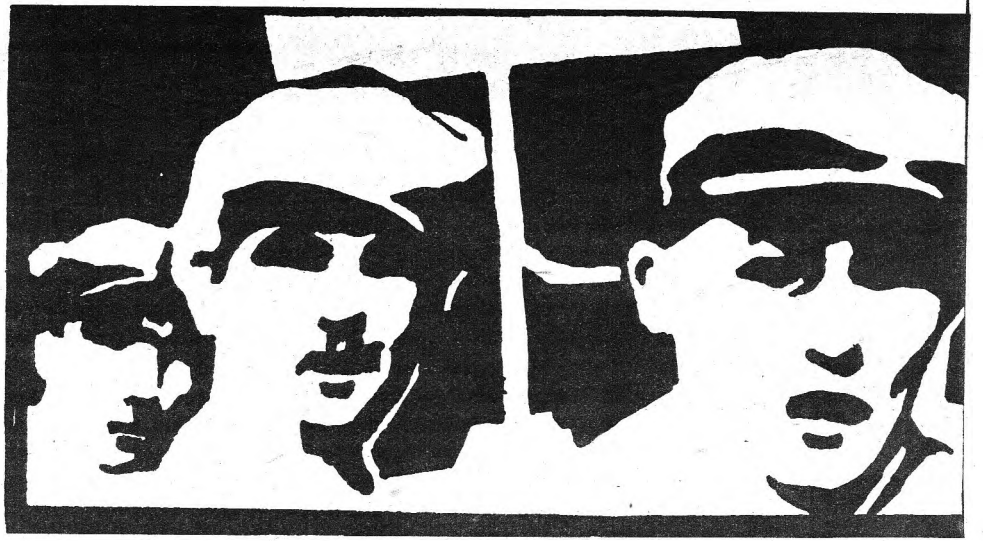
The PWOC has always correctly identified racism as the central division in the U.S. working class. In the recent campaign, racism in the communist movement was also correctly identified as one of the problems helping to maintain a mostly white membership. Then, without previous discussion on how to carry it out, the leadership launched the campaign. Antiracist work in the mass movement and a theoretical treatment of racism in the U.S. were left by the wayside in favor of "ideological struggle" against white chauvinism in the ranks.

The style of the campaign has been seen before in the communist movement, especially during the late 1940's in the Communist Party (CP). W.Z. Foster, then a leader of the CP, described that campaign in words which fit the PWOC as well:

"The left sectarian tendency isolates the Party from the masses, makes a caricature of the fight against white chauvinism, considers white chauvinism as virtually ineradicable, and proposes impossible disciplinary measures to combat it....And the sectarian trend cultivates the error by divorcing itself from the masses and making an unbalanced concentration on the Party itself. Some of these comrades would seem to imply that the Party is the main source of white chauvinism in the working class...The sectarian tendency also sharply condemns as conciliators of white chauvinism, if not as outright chauvinists, all those others who see any difference in the degree of contamination with white chauvinism. This sectarian definition of chauvinism practically eliminates education as a corrective measure, and puts the whole stress upon organizational measures. Consequently, not only have comrades been unjustly disciplined, and even expelled, but the whole fight against white chauvinism has been confused and weakened."

OVERLY REDUCTIONIST THEORY

The campaign in the PWOC reduced everything to a question of white chauvinism or petty-bourgeois ideas. The centrality of racism came to mean that racist ideology is always the central aspect of every action in relations between white and Black people. Criticisms became automatic formulas, mechanically applied. For example, "Because racism exists in interracial relationships, then racism must be



considered the essence of such relationships, and they should be discouraged." As a result, all the interracial couples in the PWOC split up.

But reducing all aspects of relationships to racism (or class bias) is contrary to Marxism-Leninism. Lenin summed it up this way: "Exaggerating any aspect of knowledge, depriving it of bonds with other aspects and with matter, and absolutizing it, inevitably leads to idealism." The PWOC's line on racism is ultimately a position of "left segregationism," and is another example of the view that whites are hopelessly compromised by their "white skin privilege" — a view adopted in the past by organizations like Sojourner Truth Organization and Prairie Fire.

The PWOC adopted the same mechanical approach to "accommodationism." All weaknesses or supposed weaknesses of national minority comrades were attributed to their accommodation to white chauvinism. Actually, to allow national minority comrades to raise criticisms of the campaign might have toppled the house of cards built up by the leadership. As a result national minority comrades left the organization at about the same rate as whites.

Common practice was to accept immediately whatever criticism was being leveled, and to call oneself and others racist (or anti-working class) in the most degrading way possible (e.g. so-and-so is "just like the KKK"). Criticisms were seen as certainties, and questioning criticism became an error in and of itself, a further proof of racist and class-bias blindspots. Meanwhile, a handful of people in leadership ran the show, while remaining relatively exempt from criticism. Leadership did seek out dissent in the PWOC, but not to learn from it, only to crush it. Undemocratic methods and manipulation were successful, and in the end the life of the PWOC was characterized by unanimous votes and suspension or expulsion of members. Questions and disagreements on anything were labelled "anti-leadership."

Usually, leadership decided the "correct" position on something, and then cell chairs were directed to "consolidate" the membership around that position. This led to little internal debate. For example, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was a legitimate point for debate everywhere throughout the movement except the PWOC. Those who expressed any doubt about the PWOC's pro-Soviet position were immediately labelled "anti-Soviet" and "anti-leadership." Another example was the PWOC's support of Gus Hall and Angela Davis in the presidential elections. Many cadre first heard about the position when they read about it in the PWOC's paper, the *Organizer*.

NO INTERNAL EDUCATION

Not only did leadership distrust rank-and-file membership, but they failed to adopt any program of cadre development. By the end, there was no internal education in the PWOC, except sessions of "ideological struggle." Indeed there was little time

for education, given the over-extension of cadre. Most members attended three or four meetings a week, in addition to 5- to 6-hour cell meetings on weekends. This was on top of union meetings, mass meetings, leafletting, phone calls, raffle ticket sales, *Organizer* distributions, demonstrations, producing the newspaper, doing child-care, etc....

Many members became demoralized at such a pace. In fact, the PWOC was acting like the revolution was next week. Not only did over-extension burn out members, but few could be recruited to an organization which was so all-consuming. And yet anyone who complained of overwork was harshly criticized and accused of lack of commitment, racism, etc.

Focusing on internal life, the PWOC gradually withdrew from mass work. On those occasions when the PWOC did work with other forces, those efforts were characterized by sectarianism and an insistence on bringing the campaign into the mass work. Two examples will help clarify.

One was work in the women's movement. Although the PWOC has said that the women's movement is part of the revolutionary movement in the U.S., locally the PWOC has adopted a sectarian attitude toward the women's movement for a number of years. This has been especially apparent in the PWOC's recent criticism of the women's movement for feminism. Feminism, strictly defined, narrowly targets men as the enemy and all too often overlooks class and racial oppression. We agree with the PWOC that feminism defined in this strict sense (as opposed to the looser sense of anti-sexism) should be criticized. However, the PWOC has criticized from the outside the women's movement, refusing to participate, claiming that work in the women's movement is not a priority.

STAND-OFF POSITION

In this stand-off position, the PWOC merely repeated the errors of other "left" groups which were all criticism and no unity; such a position only fosters anticommunism in the women's movement and makes constructive criticism of narrow feminism more difficult for activists in the women's movement. This trend, which began with the PWOC's half-hearted participation in and strident criticism of the 1979 Take Back the Night march, culminated when the PWOC walked out of the International Women's Day Philadelphia Coalition (IWD) in 1981. Not only did the PWOC walk out when it did not get its way, it then leafletted the event to put forth its criticism, and even actively encouraged scheduled speakers not to participate.

Another example of the failure of the PWOC to carry out united front work took place in the 1980 Coalition Against Racist Violence in Philadelphia. The PWOC played a leading role in this coalition, which got off to a good start. Many community groups participated, and the city government was put on the spot to do something about

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"Prince of the City"

- A Movie about Cops on the Take

by Debbie Bambino

Prince of the City is a hard-hitting film about police corruption. As the story opens, we meet Danny Ciello, the Prince, played by newcomer Treat Williams, and his partners, all of whom are members of the Special Investigative Unit (SIU), an elite narcotics squad. The SIU has complete autonomy and a long list of major drug busts to its credit. Early on, it becomes clear that in order to nail the big-time drug dealers, Danny and his partners use junkies as informants. They keep small-time junkies supplied with just enough dope to keep them talking. The film endorses this practice and even portrays Danny as having some compassion for "his poor junkies" — the message throughout being that the end justifies the unsavory means.

As the movie progresses, we get a fuller picture of the tight-knit relationships between Danny and his partners both on and off the job. We also see that the Prince lives well: nice home, car, clothes, family.

The initial challenge to Danny's continued prosperity and good guy image comes from his younger brother. His kid brother is a junkie and he wants Danny to help him. He points out that Danny's self-righteousness is way off base and makes it clear that he knows Danny is more than a little corrupt. Right about now, Danny begins to suffer from pangs of conscience and at the same time, the Chase Commission runs into town. The commission is looking for a star witness in their crusade to uncover police corrup-

tion and they start at the top with the SIU.

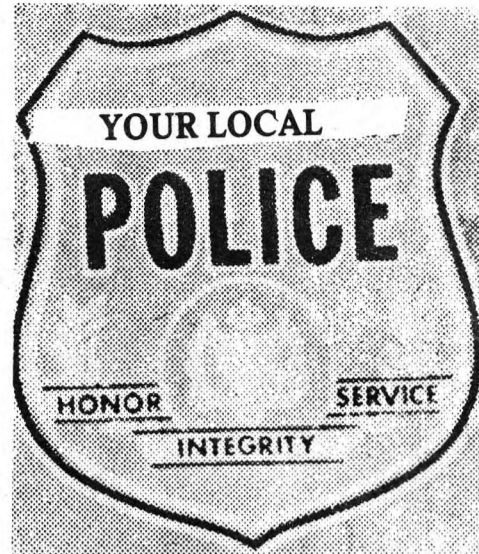
After some initial outrage and speeches about how the cops aren't the problem, it's the judges and higher ups, etc., Danny agrees to work for the commission, but on one condition: that he never be asked to hurt his partners. The commission readily agrees. Danny gets to work and heads begin to roll. The film deals a devastating blow to police corruption and then goes a step beyond, painting an accurate picture of careerism and cynical manipulation among the higher-ups, the DA's, judges and crime commission bureaucrats. There are no real heroes in this film, no Serpicos — just consistent and inevitable corruption from top to bottom.

Danny is eventually broken in the film, his nerves are shot, he's had to turn in his partners, and he's sorry he ever opened his mouth. All his arrogant illusions about his role with the commission have been shattered; he's a pawn and he knows it. He's worked with an endless line of up-and-coming federal investigators, all of whom have gotten promotions based on their association with him. On the other hand, two of his partners have committed suicide rather than face indictment and questioning. Rounding out the picture, two other partners decide to cooperate while one, Gus Levy, stands alone, refusing to "come in." Ultimately, Levy comes off as a hero, who gives the commission hell, literally knocking one investigator and his desk over. He's a tough guy who can't be bothered by charges of corrup-

tion — after all, he's still out in the street busting the *real* criminals!

One of the final scenes of the film is a summit meeting of all the investigators who have worked with Danny. They've gotten together to have a touching — but totally unrealistic — heart-to-heart about whether to indict Danny. It seems he perjured himself on the stand and so is up for prosecution, despite his invaluable contribution to the commission. They decide not to prosecute him. And while the film would have us believe it is out of their deep concern for all that Danny's been through, it doesn't take much to see that it is not good will which prompted their decision, but rather the knowledge of how it would make them look if their star witness were further tainted.

Prince of the City is a powerful and realistic treatment of police corruption. But it ultimately excuses this corruption on the grounds that corruption is everywhere and is a necessary part of the "thin blue line" that prevents society from becoming a "jungle." Illegal wire taps and supplying junkies is the "only way" to make big drug busts because of the "ridiculous" constitutional restraints on search and seizure. Because the courts are so corrupt and permissive, robbing drug dealers of their profits is one of the few effective deterrents available to the cops. And what's wrong with a cop taking a few hundred bucks, when judgeships are routinely bought and sold for thousands? This is the logic of Danny Ciello and his partners, an argument presented sympathetically by the filmmakers.



In fact, in a world in which corruption is rampant and the ethic of "look out for Number One" rules, the cops come off as the nearest thing to heroes. They compare favorably with the Ivy League, 3-piece suit brigade of prosecutors who people the film. The prosecutors are insulated from "life" and thus can afford to have their illusions and ideals about law and justice. Cops come from "the streets" and know the real way society works. Prosecutors step all over each other to advance their careers. Cops are fiercely loyal to each other. Prosecutors take the easy way of going after cops and "little guys" caught in the system. Cops get real criminals.

For all its realism and complexity, the message of *Prince of the City* is fundamentally the same as *Dagnet*, *Kojak*, and dozens of other cop shows we've seen over the years — Support Your Local Police!

Ultra-Leftism

(Continued from page 15)

racist attacks. However, in the end, the PWOC was long on "ideological struggle" and short on developing a viable program for citywide antiracist work. Granted this was a difficult task, but the PWOC's focus on struggling against white chauvinism separate from developing a program made it more so.

After one successful citywide meeting, the Coalition Against Racist Violence fell apart. Its disappearance was little discussed in the organization, which was consumed with criticism and self-criticism. After all, self-criticisms had to be written up until they were satisfactory to the leadership. The paperwork alone was enormous.

One final note on the PWOC's recent sectarianism involves its attitude toward ex-members. After cadre started resigning, the leadership maintained they were simply fleeing due to their own weaknesses and would soon drift into anticommunism and drop out of politics. In other words, there is no life after the PWOC. In some cases, the PWOC even saw fit to try to write ex-members out of the movement, by sending letters to others around the country denouncing such-and-such a comrade. In Philadelphia, members were told not to continue personal relationships with ex-cadre who resigned. Members who quit were isolated from friends, lovers and roommates who remained in.

MIRRED IN IDEALISM

To conclude, the PWOC got mired in idealism because its internal campaigns were not rooted in the struggle against capitalism but in the struggle

against people's ideas. One of the premises of the campaigns was that the lack of multi-nationality in the PWOC was mainly due to white chauvinism in the organization. But this was only partly true.

While white chauvinism was a problem, there were other factors. The one-sided analysis of the leadership ignored the initial obstacle to unity, the historical general distrust (due to racism) of national minorities toward mostly white organizations. It also ignored the ability of national minority comrades to reason politically and make decisions based on political line and practice of any organization.

Political line and especially practice are key in attracting national minority members of a communist organization. Once initial distrust is broken down, and this is done mainly through the kind of work being done in the working class, there are still many obstacles to the integration of national minority members. It is here that chauvinism as well as the petty-bourgeois atmosphere of mostly white communist organizations has become the main obstacle.

It is here that the character of cadre becomes key. White cadre will of course have racist weaknesses. What is important is their commitment to struggling against such weaknesses. Criticism must be followed by practice — it is in mass work where cadres' willingness to change will be tested. Unending internal criticism leads nowhere. To lump all cadres together and force the same confessions out of everyone does not get to the problem but only aggravates it (e.g., confessions to thinking all Blacks are

inferior, lazy, violent, etc. in the case of white cadre). This simplistic approach refuses to recognize people's different backgrounds and concrete experiences.

What was needed was an approach never before attempted in the PWOC. While a serious problem had been identified, a serious approach was not adopted in taking up the campaign. Such an approach would have required: (1) defining what racism is; (2) describing how racism is expressed both outside and inside the organization; (3) involving everyone in the organization in a discussion about how to take up the struggle against racism both inside and outside the organization; (4) collectively guiding members'

practice to overcome racist errors.

This kind of approach, involving previous discussion among cadre before the campaign, rather than the imposition of a "line" followed by whipping the cadre into shape, might have produced a viable campaign. By not consulting cadre and by not using democratic methods, the leadership relied on themselves alone to set the course of the campaign. Once the problems of their approach became obvious, leadership persisted and refused to reevaluate their "line," even though it wrecked the PWOC and the OCIC. The leadership must be held accountable for setting back both the struggle against racism and the party-building movement.

Seafood Strike

(Continued from page 6)

ties. Yet many native-born workers single out the Portuguese immigrants as the source of scabbing and the strike's weakness, even though Portuguese immigrant workers have been as militant in defense of their union and jobs as their native-born counterparts. This division has only served to help the dealers' efforts to bust the union.

STRIKERS ARE DETERMINED

In the face of the dealers' ruthlessness, the majority of the strikers are determined to save their union, despite the hardships they are facing. But some seafood workers, feeling hopeless about success and hard-pressed financially, have decided to work in non-union fillet houses, which are doing work for the struck houses. Even more serious is scabbing at the houses on strike, as some strikers have done. Lured by dealers to come back to

work, with bogus promises that they will protect them from union penalties, these workers have crossed their own lines without a contract. This has fed the dealers' hopes of busting the union out of the fish houses altogether.

It's not too late for strikers to take up the tasks needed to get a decent settlement. They must get organized and push their officers to go to the labor movement for help; to investigate whether it is possible to bring the dealers up on unfair labor charges for not bargaining in good faith; to go on radio talk shows to let the people of New Bedford know what they're going through.

There is no doubt that the strike is in serious trouble. Struggling to build rank and file participation in the union is the only way that workers can be sure their interests will be secured.